

2dartist.

122

Issue 122 | February 2016



Experiment with style

Tran Nguyen talks
to us about her
upcoming projects

plus

- Intricate illustration
- **Play with perspective**
- Paint an abandoned war machine
- **Exploring unconscious creativity**
- Paint a space buggy
- **and much more!**

Editor's Letter



ANNIE MOSS
Junior Editor









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Facebook!**

Welcome to 2dartist issue 122!

This month in *2dartist* we have more fantastic tutorials, including a guide to using photo-bashing in your speed paintings from Alejandro Olmeda, and the next installment in Juan Novelletto's series on sci-fi fundamentals. Sung Choi shows how you can quickly and simply use Photoshop to paint an abandoned war machine, and Joseba Alexander demonstrates light techniques in a space buggy scene.

Also in this issue you can find 10 more inspirational gallery images, the detailed work of traditional illustrator Xavier Casalta and an interview with the fantastic Alex Andreyev. Don't forget to check out the details of our new Challenge Gallery competition too!

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Contributors



ALEX ANDREYEV

Alex Andreyev, from St. Petersburg, Russia, has been drawing, painting and doing graphic design over the last 20 years. Now Alex works as illustrator and concept artist in the movie production industry.



JUAN NOVELLETTO

Juan Novelletto is a senior concept artist at NGD Studios, developing the *Master of Orion* reboot, and art director at the indie games studio Nastycloud. He is based in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



TRAN NGUYEN

Tran Nguyen is an award winning freelance illustrator and gallery artist from USA. Her works explore the mind's landscape and the creation of visuals for use as psycho-therapeutic support.



JOSEBA ALEXANDER

Joseba Alexander is a 2D and 3D concept artist from Barcelona, Spain. He has worked in the videogame, film, TV, advertising and book industries for the past 10 years. Here he lights an atmospheric sci-fi scene.



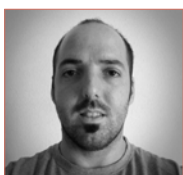
XAVIER CASALTA

Xavier Casalta is a traditional illustrator based in France. He uses a stippling technique in which he uses millions of ink dots to create intricate works, which can take hundreds of painstaking hours.



SUNG CHOI

Sung Choi (Sunghun Choi) is an award winning concept artist from South Korea currently working at Bungie in Washington. He specializes in world design and illustration for the entertainment industry.



ALEJANDRO OLMEDO

Alejandro Olmedo is a self-taught concept artist and illustrator from Malaga in Spain. He mainly specializes in creating light filled, colorful fantasy scenes using speed painting techniques.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUBMIT TO 2DARTIST?

We are always looking for tutorial artists, gallery submissions, potential interviewees, writers and more. For more information, please send a link to your work to: annie@3dtotal.com.

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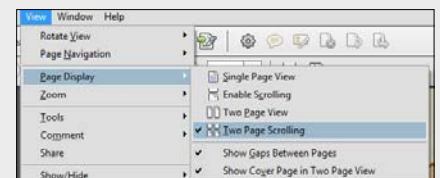
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Top tips for viewing

For optimum viewing of the magazine, it is recommended that you have the latest version of Adobe Acrobat Reader installed. You can download it for free here: [DOWNLOAD](#)

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Jump to articles

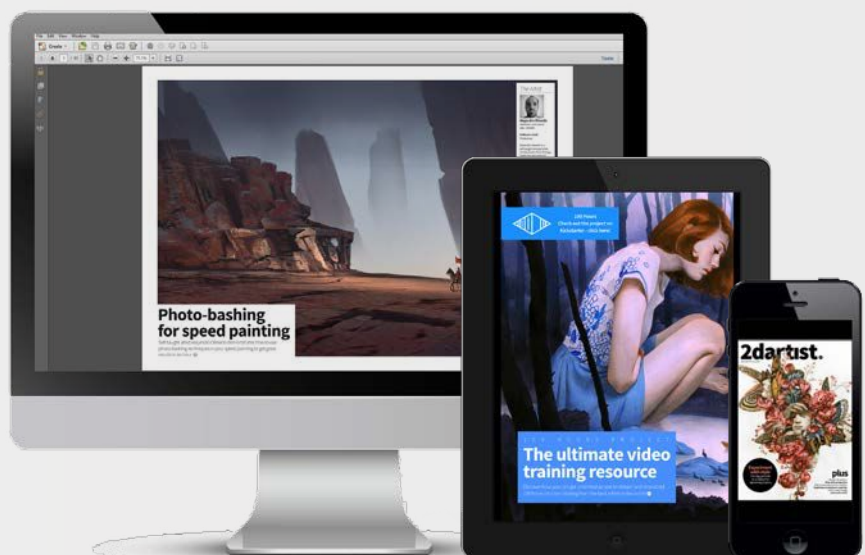
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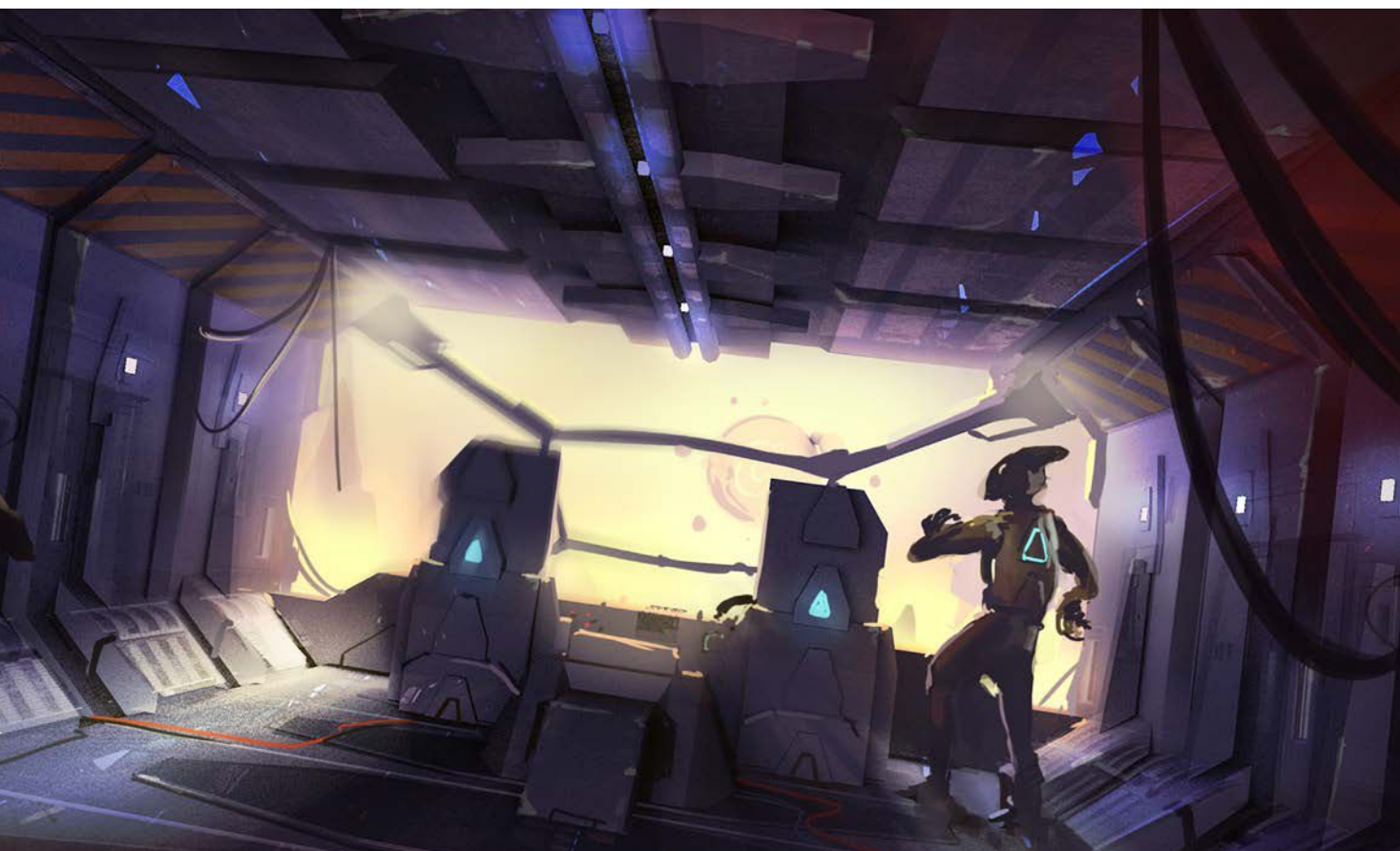
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The Artist



Alex Andreyev
alexandreev.com

Interviewed by:
Annie Moss

Alex Andreyev, from St. Petersburg, Russia, has been drawing, painting and doing graphic design for the last 20 years. Alex now works as an illustrator and concept artist in the movie production industry.

WARNING:
NUDITY

Exploring unconscious creativity

Discover how concept artist Alex Andreyev harnesses his unconscious ideas to create his intriguing illustrations ▶



Although he originally began his career using traditional tools and methods, Alex Andreyev is now an award winning concept artist working in the movie production industry. Fascinated by science, nature and the power of the human mind, Alex has developed an ability to use his unconscious ideas to inspire his work. Here, we talk to Alex about the philosophy behind his works, why he switched to digital tools and his passion for his work...

2dartist: Hi Alex, thanks for talking to 2dartist! Could you start by introducing yourself a bit to the readers?

Alex Andreyev: I've known since I was a child that painting is the most interesting occupation for me, so I have never had the problem of choice in this matter. In this sense, I'm a lucky man. I have been learning to paint my whole life. I was born in a small town with a very good art school, and thanks to my teacher I realized what I wanted to do in my life; what was the most interesting thing for me. All questions for me boiled down to one: what kind of visual art would be the most comfortable for me?

I was educated as a graphic designer and was engaged in advertising and design for a long time, working in big advertising agencies as a head of design studios. That job provided money and was fairly stable but I always wanted to draw. I wanted to do the things that are now called 'concept art'; I wanted to do illustrations. A few years ago I found a way to start a career in art and make a living at doing this. Now I am working on movie and TV projects, doing concept art, painting covers and illustrations for different books. This work brings maximum satisfaction and joy in my life.

2da: Can you tell us a bit about the ideas behind your personal project, *A Separate Reality 13*?

AA: I am usually classified as a surrealist. I don't disagree and give my artworks the relevant tags. Although I have never particularly cared about the classification, it can be said that my method of getting ideas for my work is similar to the methods used by surrealists. The closest description of this creative process is given, in my opinion, in Carlos Castaneda's book *Power of Silence*. In the novel Don Juan describes how the nagual Elias goes on dreaming journeys 'the way a wild animal prowls for food'. For me creativity has never been, and will not be, associated with the products of intelligence. I tend to find the images for my artworks on the border of my consciousness.

I use several techniques like lucid dreaming, concentration on visual images as I fall asleep, and writing my dreams, and so on. I don't try to analyze consciously the images that have been observed in



What do you think has been most influential to your career success?

The art school in my native town Chudovo was a very cool place. I used to live nearby. As far as I remember I have drawn since childhood. So when I learned of this opportunity, I immediately went there to enrol. I was then 12 years old.

For me art school associates with Alexander Podberezsky, a great teacher. He did not only teach us to draw, but also instilled a sense of taste, and taught us to distinguish real art from mass culture. He was and still is my best teacher.

such states. Consciousness is the thin surface of the bottomless ocean of unconsciousness. Therefore, any attempts to reduce everything to simple and direct associations are useless. As a rule, I can only truly understand the inner meaning of my artworks

after showing them to someone else, rather than just by myself.

Those areas of virtual space where I'm looking for ideas generally lie in the half-forgotten childhood

● City P. Dome



memories, in the small town where I was born: the railway, forest, river, plants, houses, sky of incredible beauty. I also love flying and heaven for me is a completely native environment, where I can place a lot of the important ideas and feelings.

Creativity for me is the fixation of certain states of consciousness. My creative objective is to convey these conditions with minimal interference, and minimal distortion. This is important, it excites. This is the bang. This is the essence and the cause of what I do. I spend more time drawing than I need just because I stop from time to time to look at what I have transferred onto the canvas.

2da: Where do you find inspiration for your work? Which other artists do you particularly admire?

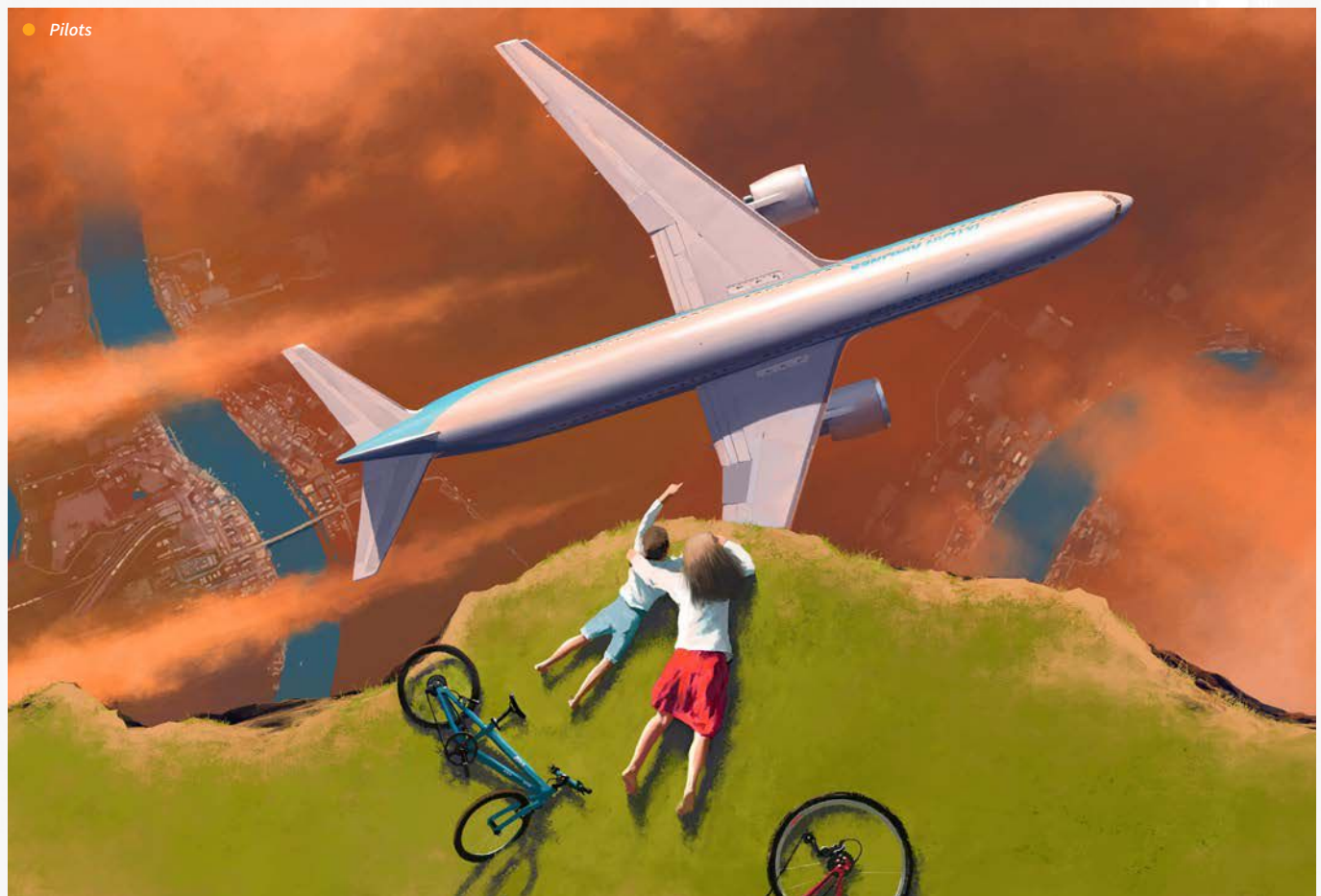
AA: Everywhere. The world around us is mysterious, beautiful and unusual. Every look (or sound, or even smell) can suddenly become an impetus for the idea of a new picture. It can open the door into a long-forgotten past; to the things hidden in unconscious recollection and bind into something quite paradoxical and amazing.

In the 1980s the American scientist Stephen LaBerge was the first to prove experimentally the existence of lucid dreams; a state of consciousness when a

person realizes that he or she is dreaming, but may, to some extent, control this dream. The depth and brightness of the experience can be compared with those that we experience in everyday life, and even exceed them, and your opportunities here have no limits. It is impossible to overestimate the impact this can have on the creative process. A person experiencing this could understand where the numerous stories about alien abductions, mystical revelations and communion with spiritual beings come from. However surprising it might appear, it works. And it's available for almost everybody, because it does not require some sort of superhuman effort. ►







My favorite artist is Zdzisław Beksiński. His work is often called 'poetry after Auschwitz'. This is perhaps the only artist who can make me go through catharsis. His work literally knocks me down. It's useless to describe it, I can only advise you to look at his paintings. I really like the works of Sergey Kolesov too. This Russian artist now lives in France and works as a concept artist. He has a unique combination of flawless painting technique and mind-blowing ideas.

2da: What are your preferred tools to work with generally? Are there any tools you find yourself using again and again?

AA: Initially, I was educated as a graphic artist. And for a long time I was doing traditional graphics, but wasn't satisfied with the results.

For me the influence of technology for traditional fine arts was overwhelming; it was limiting my freedom. In addition, oil painting and etching needs a separate workshop. Besides the acid is harmful for the health. There are a lot of various troubles to distract me from creative work. If I do not immediately see the result of my work, the snapshot of consciousness simply does not happen.

But in digital painting I'm just taking the stylus, drive it on my Wacom and immediately, here and now, I can see the results of my work. Many of my friends,

🕒 Artist Timeline Alex's career so far

1994: Alex graduated from the Novgorod State University achieving a Bachelor of Architecture and Design degree

2002 – 2006: Art director and head of design studio in Ogilvy, St. Petersburg

2006 – 2012: Senior concept artist for animated film *Kool! Kin-Dza-Dza*

2013: *Kool! Kin-Dza-Dza* is winner of the Asia Pacific Screen Awards for best animated film

2015: Personal exhibitions in Warsaw, Dresden, St. Petersburg

traditional artists, can't agree with me. There was a time when I argued them hoarse about it. Well, to each his own. For some people it is important to feel paper, scrape, smell the oil paints and so on. For me it is more interesting to see how the future is slowly coming around.

2da: Which tools and software would you like to learn in the future?

AA: Now I am intensively studying three-dimensional modeling apps. I learned about a few of them and chose 3D Coat and Blender. Blender is very convenient, and more comfortable than 3ds Max, which I used to study. It is possible to work very quickly in Blender, especially if you use hotkeys.

3D Coat is very suitable for sculpting but it is very suitable for artists too as it is incredibly comfortable for texturing. You do not need to worry about complicated things. There is real time rendering in both apps, which is fundamentally important for me because I need to see the results of my work here and now. Furthermore, 3D Coat is very inexpensive, and Blender is free.

2da: Lighting is very important to your work; do you have any tips for readers who want to work on their lighting effects?

AA: The value of my work is not in the technique (my technique is not perfect, I have to learn and learn all the time), but in my ideas. Therefore, I can hardly ►

● *Vesper*



● Mars



say anything really new to your readers. I usually try to use contrasting compositions with backlighting silhouetted. I like to use the effects of lens flare and bokeh; it helps to increase the accuracy of the image.

2da: Over the years you have worked on game and film production, created book and magazine covers, worked in advertising, held exhibitions and even given lectures. How do you find these different branches differ?

AA: The peculiarities of each area is a topic for a long conversation, so I can't tell you about them in this interview. I can only say that different people can find interesting things in different directions. Through trial and error I found that I do not like to teach. Offline exhibitions are less effective for me and more expensive than online presentations. I have exhibited my works offline, only when I am invited on favorable terms. In this case the exhibition is a good way to find new friends and travel to new places in the world.

2da: What do you most enjoy about working on a new project?

AA: Most of all I like the moment when I find an unexpected visual solution. It does not always happen right away. I often need a few days to ponder, to search for references, to dive into the atmosphere of the project, but sooner or later this leads to a picture. And all you need to do next is to carry it to the canvas and improve, improve, improve.

2da: Are there any other areas in the digital art world that you'd like to branch into and why?

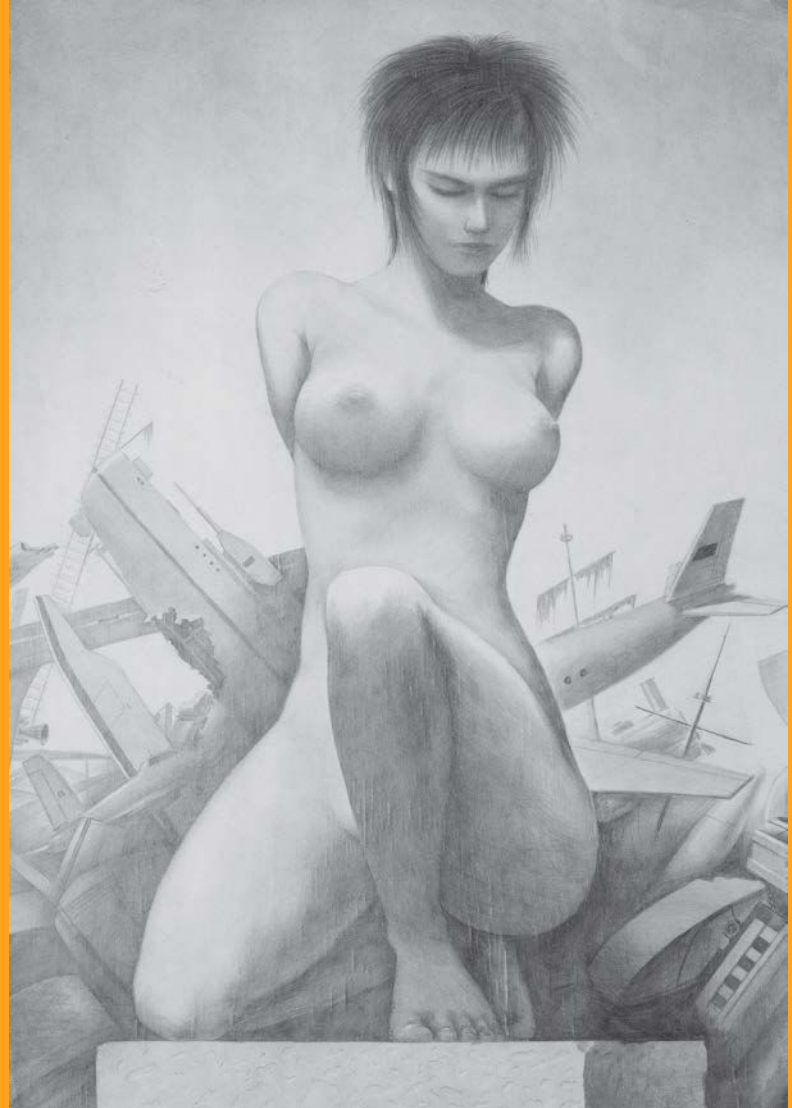
AA: As I said, now I am very interested in 3D. In the last few years the way of interaction between the user and the program has greatly changed. This method has become much friendlier for artists who want to see results immediately, rather than waiting for a long visualization process and then redoing everything again. Now the process has become fast, convenient and effective. For me, these recent changes are fundamental, and perhaps I will give more and more attention to 3D modeling.

2da: What initial steps do you take when you are first given a brief for a new project? Do you dive straight into the sketching phase or do you have a more analytical process?

AA: In any project, even the absolutely fantastic ones, the most important thing for me is the visual authenticity. At a moment when the viewer interacts with the image, he compares what he sees now with his past experience (conscious and unconscious). The more the thing he or she sees relates to his or her experience, the greater the effect the artwork will have. This in turn means that I have to internalize the

Alex's significant artwork

My first creative work. 1988, I was 16. It looks, of course, very naive. When I showed it to my teacher in art school, I was very worried about his reaction. But I honestly tried to express my state of mind in that drawing. And then he said these words: 'This is your first creative work'. I remembered it. Now I realize that honesty is probably the most important thing in art.



● *White Sea*





● 26.08

task and identify it with my experience and cultural context. So I pay much attention to the preparation and analysis of the project, and to the search of reference images. Often the ideas come at this stage.

2da: Do you have any tricks or tips to keep yourself motivated on a difficult project?

AA: I have worked as the head of design studios in several advertising agencies. My duties included traffic management; distribution and monitoring the

work of the designers. The work was very hard, stiff and nervous, and deadlines were very tight. In this mode I spent a total of about 15 years.

Now, when I have to deal with my own traffic management only, considering the fact that I really love what I'm doing, I have no problems with my motivation and deadlines. I have an opposite problem: when I work I forget about sleep and food, I simply can't stop. My relatives literally have to pull me off of the computer from time to time.

2da: Can you tell us anything about the projects you are working on at the moment?

AA: Now I'm doing concept art for five projects, in Russia and in the United States. They are three movies, one TV show and one solo performance (I am creating multimedia scenery for it). In accordance with the agreements, I cannot disclose the details of those projects. I can only say that some of them are linked to the screen adaptations of my favorite writers - Stanisław Lem and the Strugatsky brothers.



In addition, two projects are awaiting an investor's decision: a US TV series based on the works of H.P. Lovecraft (also, incidentally, one of my favorite writers) and the Russian TV show ZONA, inspired by the Strugatsky brothers works.

2da: When you're not working hard on your art, what do you like to do with your time?

AA: I try to learn and travel, to get the new experiences. I try to do things that I have never done

before. I learned to ride a motorcycle, was certified as a diver, and suddenly translated one interesting book about the philosophy of mind into Russian (it was the only way to read it). Generally, my hobby is reading popular science literature.

My heroes are scientists, the people who reveal to us the beauty of our universe. And of course my family; my daughter is growing, and attends the art school, she loves to draw. It's great when there are common interests and talking points with your child.

2da: And finally, what should we look out for from you in the future?

AA: I would like to continue doing what I'm doing now. I would like to work on the creation of intelligent and beautiful movies in the future. ●

Thank you Alex for chatting to 2dartist!





Xavier Casalta
casaltaxavier.com

Xavier Casalta is a traditional illustrator, based in France. He uses a stippling technique in which he uses millions of ink dots to create intricate works.

A R T I S T S P O T L I G H T

Intricate illustration

Discover the stippling technique work of Xavier Casalta who creates minutely detailed illustrations over hundreds of hours ▶

Xavier Casalta, a young freelance illustrator based in the south of France, has developed his passion for drawing and an education in visual communication into a career creating exquisitely detailed drawings. He creates his pieces with a technique called stippling which he discovered while learning about hand lettering typography. The technique uses thousands, if not millions, of tiny ink dots to create a larger image.

Xavier's working process requires hours of concentration, with his most recent work *Autumn* taking a total of 370 hours to perfect over working days that lasted between 9 and 14 hours. This month, Xavier took time out from his challenging work schedule to talk to 2dartist about his working practices, his favorite tools and his current projects...

2dartist: Hello Xavier! Thanks for talking to 2dartist. First off, could you introduce yourself with a bit about your background and projects?

Xavier Casalta: Hello! I am a 23-year-old artist from the south of France. I started my career as an artist in September, 2013, after I finished my studies in visual communication. I create artworks with millions of tiny dots, using a 0.10mm nib and black ink.

"I spend a lot of time on each piece. I really focus on small parts and keep working on the same zone until it's finished"

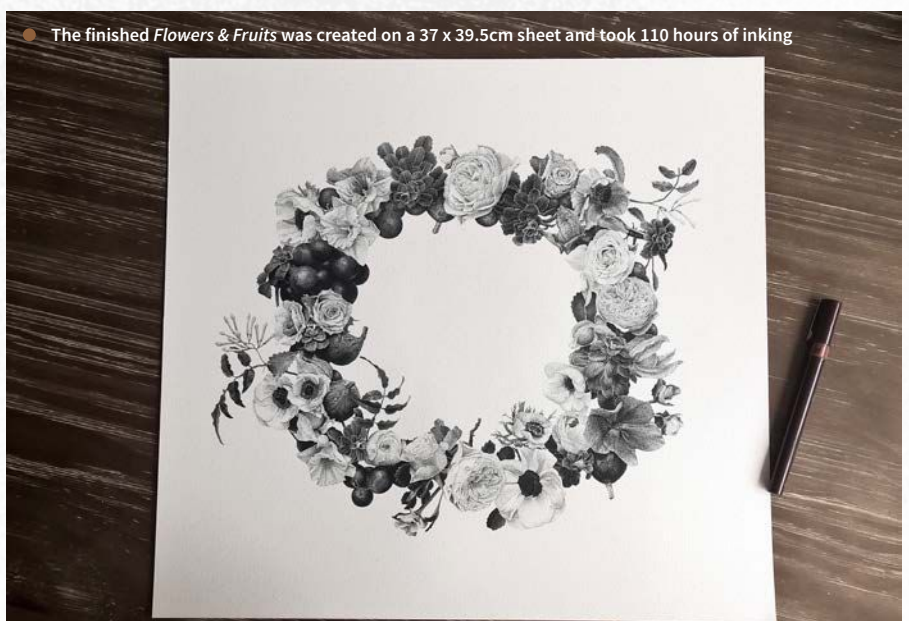
2da: What first attracted you to illustration? And what encouraged you to take it up as a career?

XC: I first started drawing as a hobby when I was younger. As I had a lot of pleasure doing it, once I finished my studies at the age of 21, I decided to give it a chance and try to make a career out of it. It was quite challenging as I was really a beginner and knew nothing about illustration.

2da: Where did you first discover stippling? What did you find so inspiring about it?

XC: Well I was learning typography, especially hand lettering. I was creating typographic compositions with black ink, and after a few pieces, I wanted to bring some shades in my artworks. I tried different techniques like cross hatching, pencil, and found that stippling was quite interesting.

2da: Your drawings are incredibly precise, how do you ensure that your drawings are accurate? ►

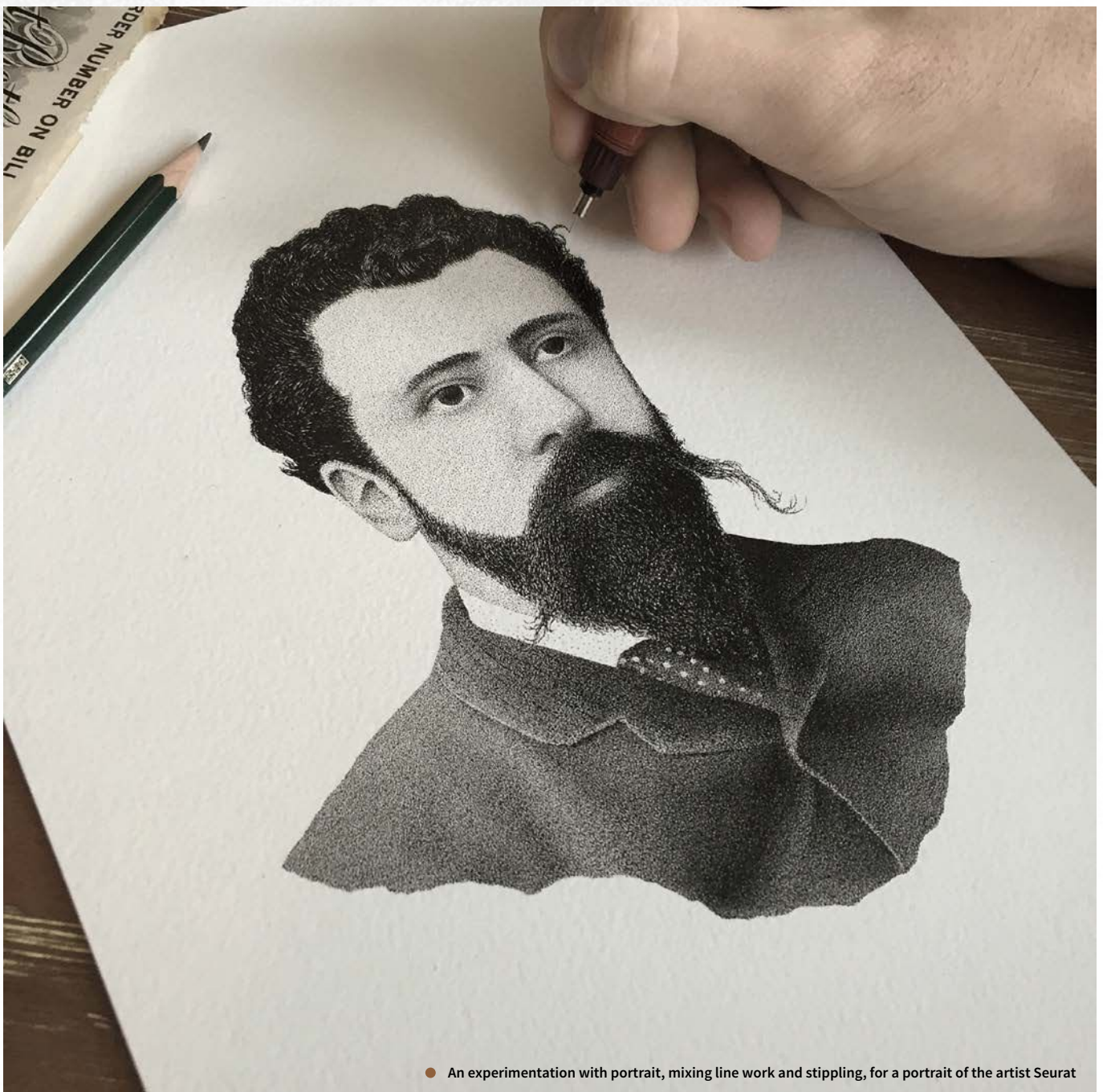




Work in progress of Goyard



Goyard is a typographic composition mixed with illustration created on an A4 sheet

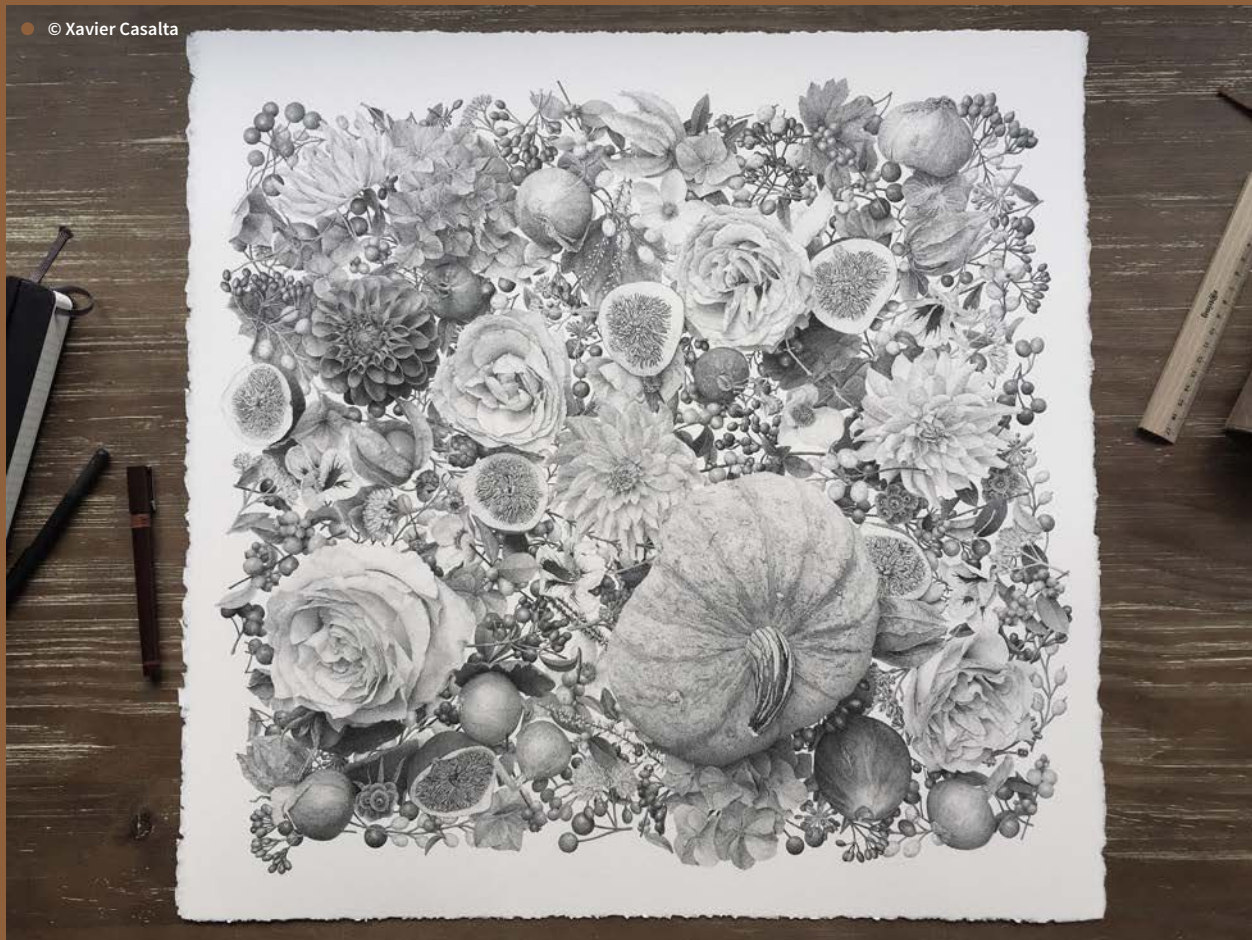


An experimentation with portrait, mixing line work and stippling, for a portrait of the artist Seurat

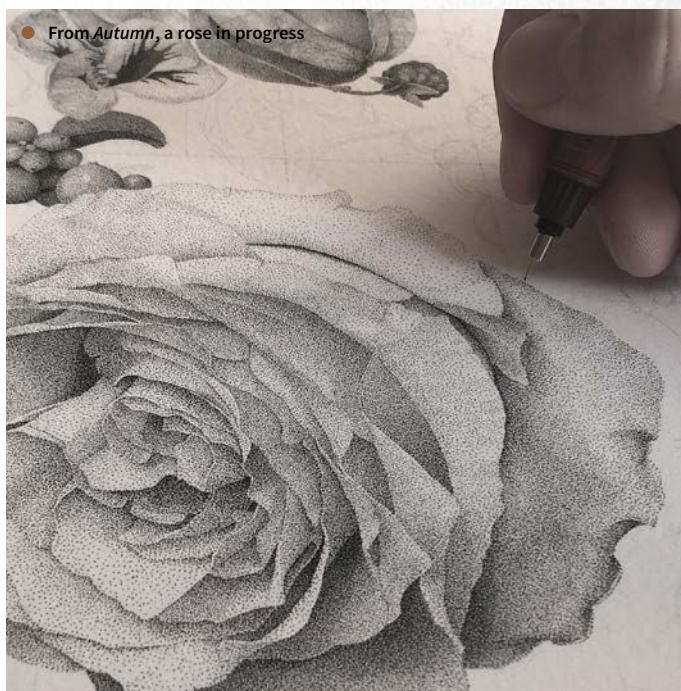
⚡ SIGNIFICANT ARTWORK

My recent piece *Autumn* took me 370 hours to complete and is a part of a series of four artworks, representing the four seasons. It was a great challenge to complete this one and it allowed me to progress on a single piece, over the course of several months. It was created on a 56 x 56cm sheet, composed of seven million dots.

● © Xavier Casalta



● From *Autumn*, a rose in progress



● A work in progress photo of *Autumn* taken after 220 hours of work

XC: I spend a lot of time on each piece. I really focus on small parts and keep working on the same zone until it's finished.

2da: What are your preferred tools to work with and why?

XC: I have worked with only the same pen for two years, a 0.10mm Isograph. The only reason is that I can put my own ink inside, as I want to get deep black dots. Regarding the paper, I've never found the perfect one and I'm still trying to find the one I like the most.

2da: What advice can you give to our readers who want to develop their drawing techniques to incorporate more detail?

XC: I would say have patience and a strong desire to progress. I guess that after thousands of hours of practice, you can get to a good level at almost anything you do.

2da: Do you have a particular place you like to go to draw? Do you create your works in a studio, at home or out in nature?

XC: I work at home where I have a studio. I only draw here, never on the train or outside. I really need my architect table, the good light and my comfortable chair.

2da: What has been your favorite project to work on so far?

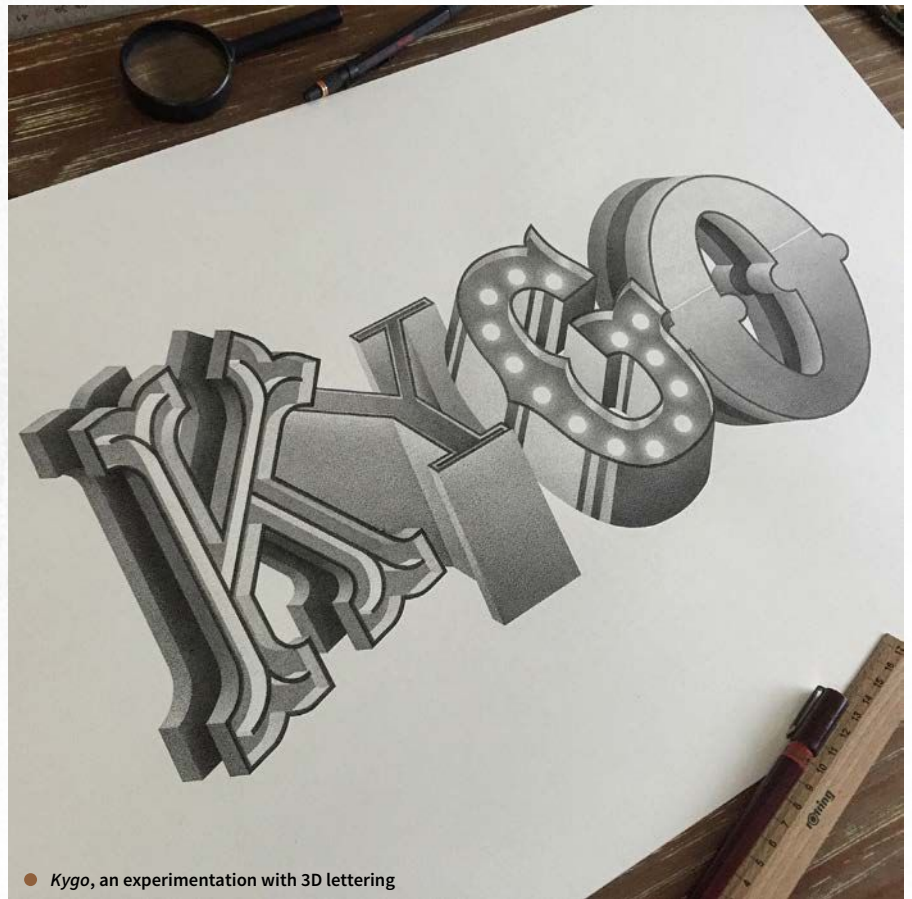
XC: I think that the one I'm currently working on is the most exciting. It's a series of four pieces that will represent the four seasons. I recently finished the first one *Autumn* and I'm really excited to start the *Winter* one.

2da: Your works often take hundreds of hours to complete, how long are your individual work sessions and how do you maintain enthusiasm over the course of a project?

XC: I usually work around 9-14 hours a day, six or seven days a week. I try to stop every two hours for 5-10 minutes to relax and rest my eyes. It is so exciting to finish a piece that I'm often really enthusiastic about working. It is more difficult when I work on big pieces. The one that took 370 hours was challenging regarding the enthusiasm.

2da: Last year you experimented with creating with watercolor bubbles, can you tell us a bit more about this technique?

XC: Well it was a fun project. At that time I was thinking that maybe I could try to keep the dot



● *Kygo*, an experimentation with 3D lettering

style and use another medium. I wanted to try watercolor and the first thing I did was a mistake, put a big bubble on my sheet. It was looking great so I decided to push that. I then tried different tools, and finally worked with a syringe.

2da: Are there any other skills and techniques you would you like to learn in the future? Are there any materials you would like to experiment with?

XC: I would really love to progress more with the stippling technique before I start learning something else. In the future, maybe I'll learn to draw with pencil. I never took the time to practice this and I think that it could be interesting to be able to play with gray shades instead of always using the same black.

2da: What has your experience as a freelance artist been like?

XC: It is really exciting, even if it is quite hard at the beginning.

2da: What does a working day in the life of Xavier look like?

XC: Well I usually wake up at 7am and start working as soon as I'm ready, around 8am. I work until noon then take an hour off to eat and rest. I usually get back to work from 1pm to 6pm.

Exercise for an hour, and take another hour for dinner and do other things, like video games or board games. I usually get back to work at 8 or 9pm and work until 11 pm or midnight. Some days I won't work on the evening and go outside, sometimes it will be during the afternoon. It's never the same.

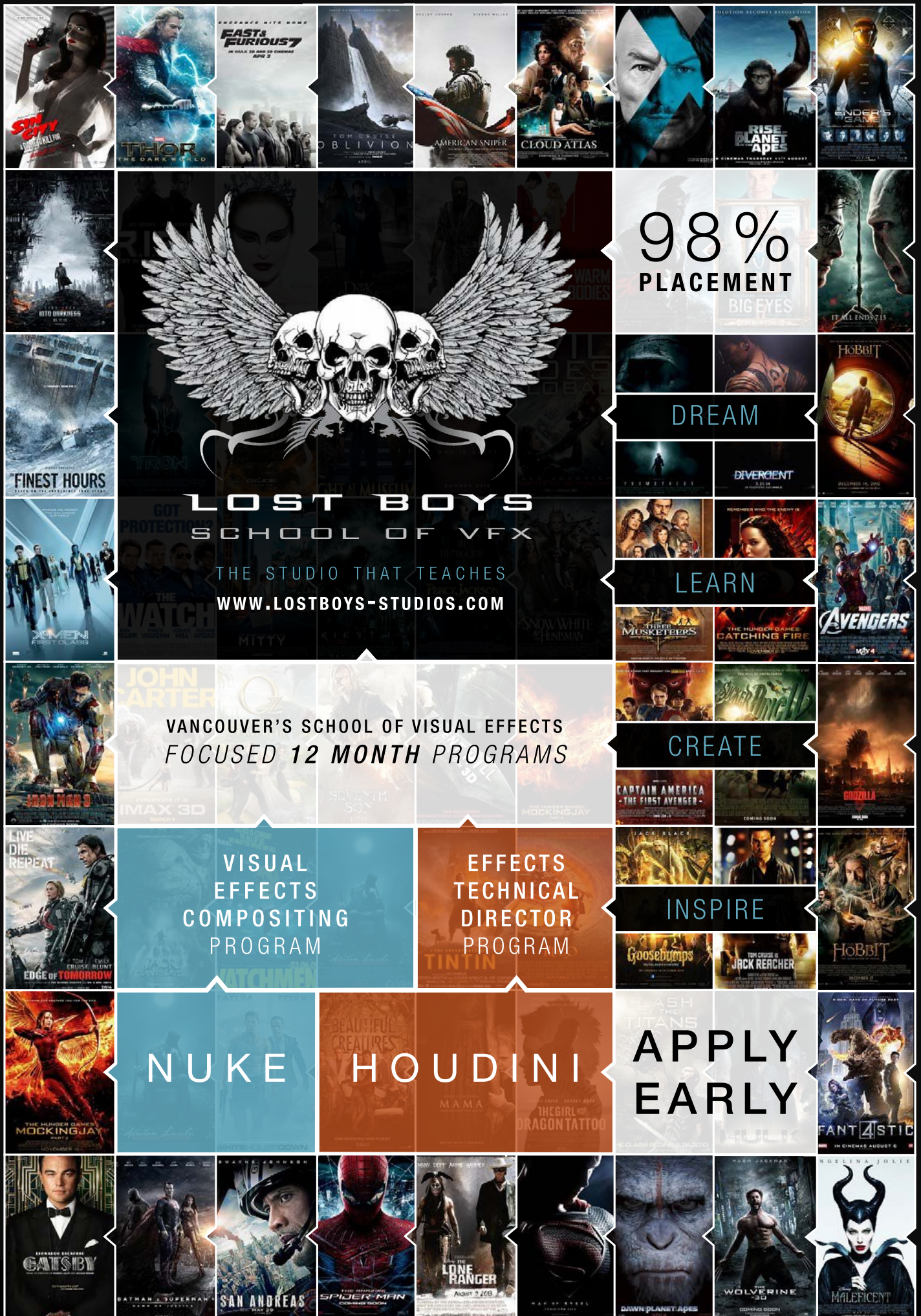
2da: How do you like to spend your time when you aren't creating beautiful art?

XC: Well I'm often bored when I do not create things. I used to play a lot of video games when I was younger, but now I feel like I'm losing precious time. I prefer to leave my home for weeks or months, to travel and visit places, rather than trying to do things for an afternoon instead of working.

2da: And finally, what can we look forward to from you next?

XC: I'm preparing a lot of projects for 2016, between architecture, typography and vegetal work. As I'm getting faster with the stippling technique, I'm now able to work on bigger scales, and I'm really excited to show you the new pieces I'll work on! ●

Thank you Xavier for taking the time to speak to 2dartist today!



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CHARACTERS

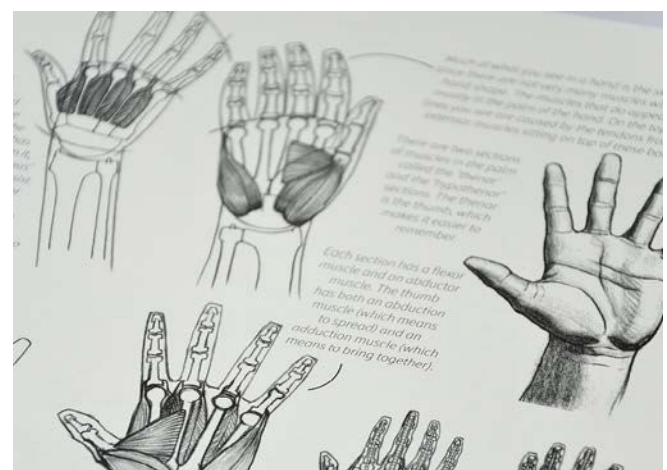
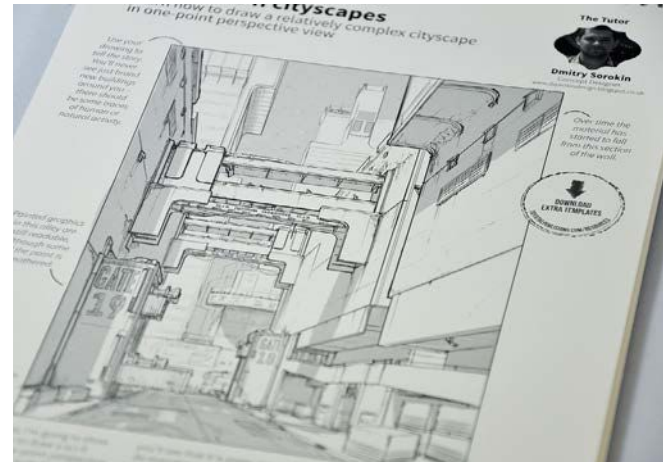
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100 Hours
Check out the project on
Kickstarter - [click here!](#)

1 0 0 H O U R S P R O J E C T

Experiment with style

Tran Nguyen discusses her latest projects including her involvement
in the new video training resource 100 Hours ▶

The Artist



Tran Nguyen
mynameistran.com

Job title:
Freelance illustrator

Tran Nguyen is an award winning freelance illustrator and gallery artist from USA. Her works explore the mind's landscape and the creation of visuals for use as psycho-therapeutic support.



Running throughout February on the crowd funding site Kickstarter is an exciting project by 3dtotal.com aimed at benefiting both professional artists and learners.

100 Hours is designed to be the ultimate video training resource, featuring 100 hours of exclusive high-quality video tutorial training from the best artists in the world.

Although there is a great demand for video training within the creative community, many novice artists have to contend with off-putting subscription fees or compete for limited places on highly competitive courses run directly by artists. While these schemes provide

important revenues for artists, they can often be obstacles for many new and improving artists. Featuring videos from artists such as traditional painter Tran Nguyen, digital illustrator Ilya Kuvshinov, cartoon artist Randy Bishop, 3D digital sculptor Glauco Longhi and traditional sculptors the Shiflett brothers among many others, 100 Hours aims to make a diverse range of video training affordable and accessible for learners.

With only a one-off charge of US\$25 for full access to unlimited streaming and downloads of all 100 Hours onto computer, phone or tablet, the training will be available at the convenience of users.

Furthermore, by using the crowd funding site, the project is intended to accumulate such a large number of backers that despite the low cost to learners, every artist creating a video would receive a fee comparable with the amount they might make from a subscription site or from running an independent course. So this project, if successful, will provide learners with a great resource while continuing to support the 100 amazing artists who have already inspired so many to explore their artistic talents.

To celebrate the launch of 100 Hours on Kickstarter we spoke to Tran Nguyen, one of the artists contributing to the project, about ►



● A Borrowed Tomorrow

● *A Distressed Damsel* © ImagineFX







her work, her advice for budding artists and what she is looking forward to from the 100 Hours project.

2dartist: Hi Tran, thank you for talking to 2dartist today! Can you start things off by introducing yourself a bit to any readers who aren't familiar with your work?

Tran Nguyen: My name is Tran, pronounced 'Tron', and I'm a freelance illustrator and gallery artist with an interest in therapeutic imagery. I was born in Vietnam then raised in the United States, and currently I reside in Georgia. I'm also half deaf.

2da: Can you tell us about your path to becoming a professional artist? Was there a significant moment when you knew that this was the career for you?

TN: I started out working in the gallery market with Thinkspace in Los Angeles after I graduated college. I sent them an email for a portfolio review and was fortunate enough to be offered showcase space. It wasn't until 2011 that I transitioned into the illustration market with the help of my agent. Through the exposure of the gallery and



● *Traveling Through a Distant Day* © Uncanny Magazine





● The Love of Insects

“Don’t be a slave to your reference, but have enough to help guide you in capturing the essence of the human body and its surrounding”

an agent, I started receiving more and more work and offers.

2da: When you were starting out as an artist what helped you to develop and hone your technique?

TN: I emulated a lot of other artists when I was attending SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design) to figure out how they problem-solved and worked with their tools (keep in mind, you should interpret it as your own and not imitate their style for future use). I experimented with various media and styles to find my technique of glazing with acrylic and colored pencil.

2da: What advice can you give to our readers who want to develop their drawings into more complex illustrations like yours?

TN: References are extremely important. I use quite a bit of them. Don’t be a slave to your reference, but have enough to help guide you in capturing the essence of the human body and its various surroundings.

2da: We’re so excited that you’re taking part in the 100 Hours project, can you tell us what you like about this project?

TN: I very much appreciate the diversity in this group of artists – their styles, medias, and problem-solving approaches. Again, I think it’s important to expose yourself to different perspectives so that you can pin-point what’s most suitable for you.

2da: Aside from your own video, whose tutorial are you most looking forward to and why?

TN: I’m looking forward very much to Jean-Baptiste Monge’s tutorial. I’ve been curious about how he’s able to illustrate such whimsical characters and environments.

2da: And finally, what other project have you got in the works at the moment?

TN: I’m currently working on a book cover for Subterranean Press, a piece for Tor.com’s many lovely short stories, and a few group exhibitions in the West Coast. I’m very fortunate to be working with these generous art directors and galleries! ●

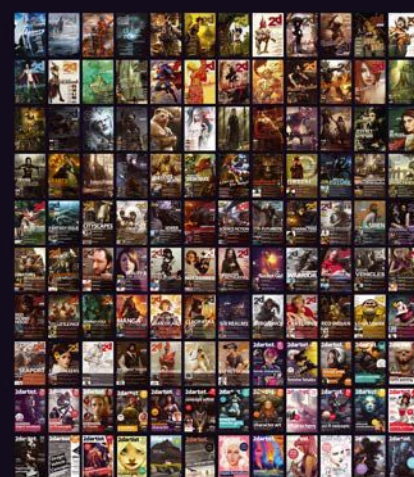
Thank you Tran for talking to 2dartist!

● *Where the Creek Stood Still*



A2 POSTER | Image by Pablo Carpio

Pablo Carpio.



2dartist.

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Art Gallery

Each issue the 2dartist team selects 10 of the best digital images from around the world. Enjoy!



Base #4

José Julián Londoño Calle

Year created: 2016

Web: artstation.com/artist/handsdigitalstudio

Submit your images! Simply email annie@3dtotal.com





Greenfinger

Col Price

Year created: 2016

Web: coldesign.co.uk

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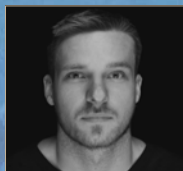
Landet Oft in Tempelhof

Igor Piwowarczyk

Year created: 2015

Web: artstation.com/artist/igorpiwowarczyk





Steve's house

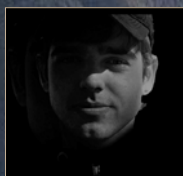
Henrik Evensen

Year created: 2016

Web: artstation.com/artist/selvestehe







Adventures of the monkey king

Juan Pablo Lozano

Year created: 2016

Web: artstation.com/artist/jp-z

© JPz

A JOURNEY
TO THE
WEST



JP'Z



Space Oasis

Shen Fei

Year created: 2016

Web: shenfeic.blogspot.com





Industrial Wastelands

Kushal Tikle

Year created: 2013

Web: kushaltikle.com

© Images are copyright of Kushal Tikle



MUMBAI, INDIA 2098

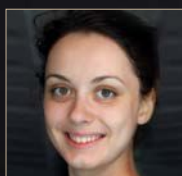
After the corporations ran the global government into the ground, billions of the poorest souls around the world were left to fend for themselves. Ninety percent of the fifty point three million people in Mumbai have settled into a sprawling third world slum city. The extremely wealthy around the world sheltered from the corporate funded warfare and the grasping fingers of the impoverished outside in self contained cities called Arcologies.

story by thought gun shells.

अः नः

D3

KUSHAL TIKLE



Alien Deer

Maria Poliakova

Year created: 2016

Web: artstation.com/artist/tubikraski



Raccoon Express

James Ng

Year created: 2013

Web: jamesngart.com

© James Kin-Cheung Ng





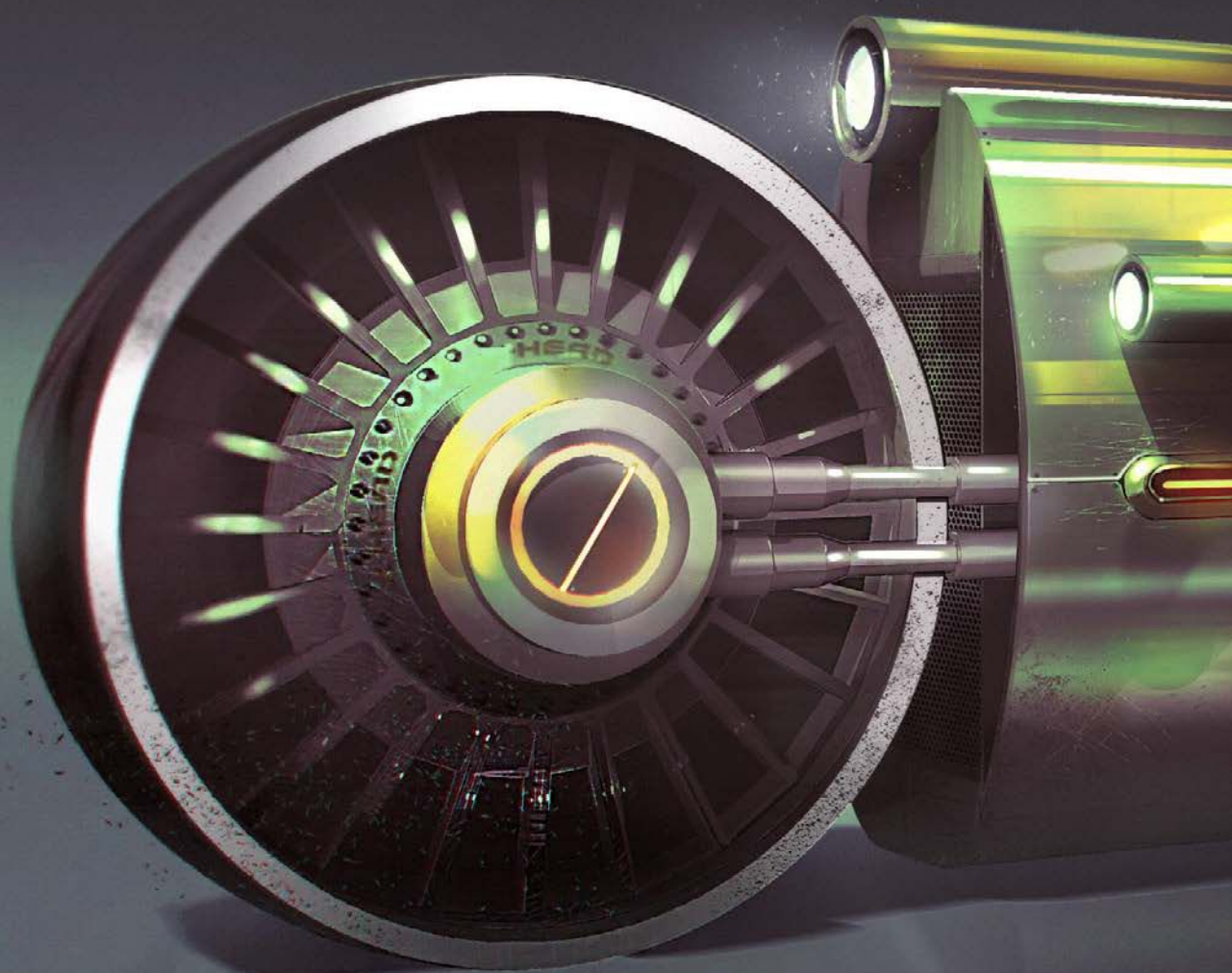


OP-87

Giovanni Silva

Year created: 2016

Web: giovannisilva.artstation.com



S I L





Enter the Challenge Gallery!

For the chance to win a 3dtotal shop voucher worth £60 and see your work featured in our magazine, challenge yourself to create an original artwork based on the mini-brief below.

Once you have created your artwork, submit it along with your contact details to 2dchallenge@3dtotal.com with the title 'Challenge gallery' by 21st March 2016 to be in with a chance of winning!

Mini-Brief: Paint a scene based on the idea of renewal! Create a character coming back to life or an environment reborn. Remember, your image should be entirely your own work and not use fan art.

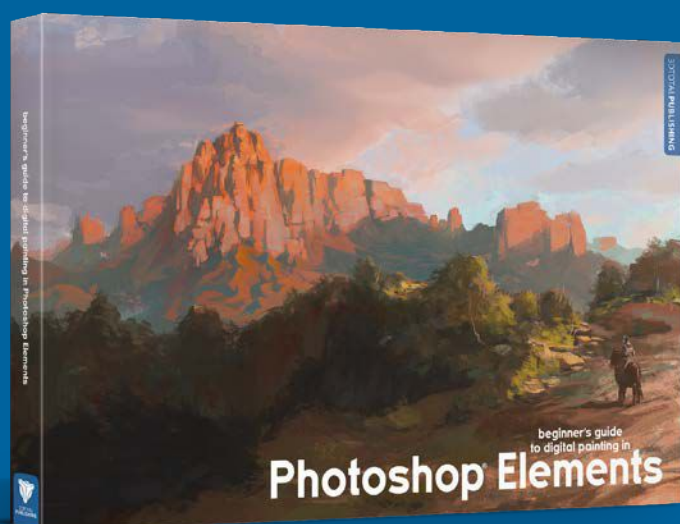
Good luck!

3DTOTALPUBLISHING



beginner's guide to digital painting in Photoshop® Elements

The *Beginner's Guide* series is back with a clear and comprehensive look at working in Adobe Photoshop Elements.



In this sequel to the best-selling *Beginner's Guide to Digital Painting in Photoshop* book, a new set of talented artists break down the best and simplest techniques for creating amazing artwork in Photoshop Elements. This fundamental guide offers easy-to-follow steps that guide you through setting up your software, working with brushes and basic art theory, as well as chapters on creating certain artistic styles.

With a simplified interface and fewer variable parameters to learn than its big brother, Photoshop, Photoshop Elements is an ideal tool for any artist's first digital adventure. This book is therefore a perfect resource for:

- Newcomers to Photoshop and digital painting
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- Lecturers and students teaching/studying digital art courses
- Hobbyists who want to learn useful tips

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Photo-bashing for speed painting

Self-taught artist Alejandro Olmedo demonstrates how to use photo-bashing techniques in your speed painting to get great results in an hour ▶

The Artist



Alejandro Olmedo

artstation.com/artist/alex_olmedo

Software Used:

Photoshop

Alejandro Olmedo is a self-taught concept artist and illustrator from Malaga, Spain. He specializes in creating light filled, colorful fantasy scenes using speed painting techniques.



Get tips for painting a quick color sketch using ArtRage...

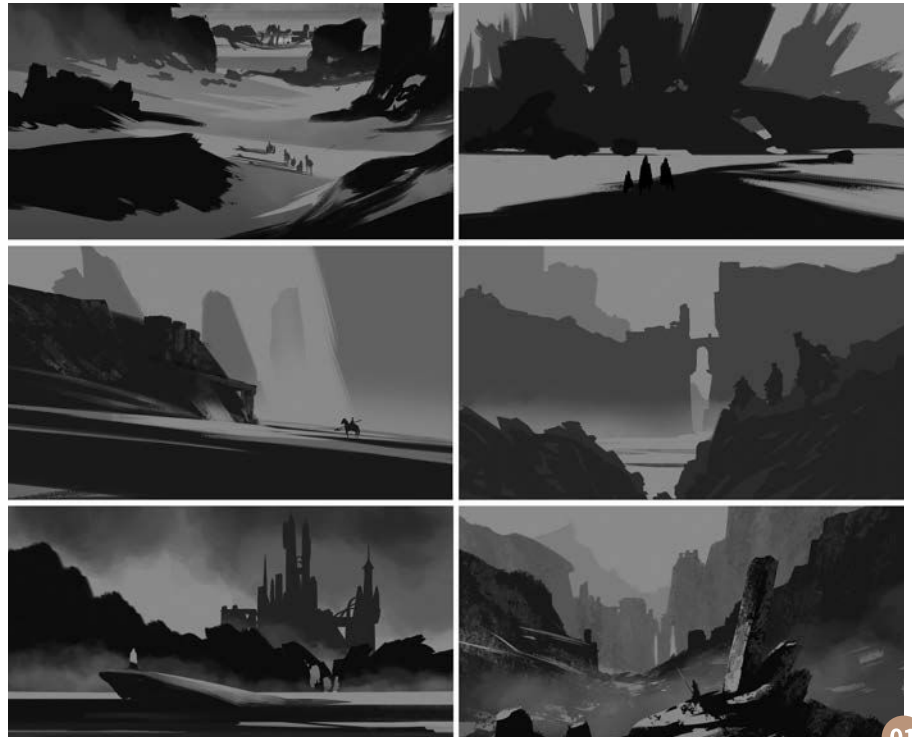
Hello guys, in this tutorial I'm going to show you how to make a fantasy painting in an hour using some of the techniques I use in my daily work. As you can see in most of my paintings, I am passionate about the classic fantasy themes, using knights, castles and dragons. So this time won't be much different.

In this case I'm going to start with a black and white sketch, a really quick one (10 minutes or less) focusing on the composition and done with just a few values, on which I'll add color and textures resulting in a beautiful landscape. For best results in less time I will use some photos. They will be used as references, color palettes and textures. For me, the use of photos has become almost indispensable lately, most of the time only as a reference, but they help me a lot with color palettes as I am not one of those people who can control them easily.

Another important point of this tutorial is the use of Clipping Masks and the possibilities it gives us to know how to control Channels in Photoshop. All of this combined with different texture brushes will allow us to end up with a pleasant and vibrant image to be able to show ideas to our clients, or simply serve as practice for personal paintings. I hope that you find it interesting and might learn some things that enhance or facilitate your work.

01 The idea: By doing quick black and white sketches we can easily generate a bunch of ideas, some of them will serve and others not, but as I usually said, the first impression is most of the time the best one. I try to make some quick black and white sketches once a week focusing on the composition and lighting. For this speed painting I chose this picture because I liked the idea, the lighting and the composition. It's simple but it has all the necessary elements needed to explain my process for this tutorial.

02 Composition: As you can see in the picture, this sketch complies with basically all the fundamental rules of composition. I have a main object or focal point, the knight, placed at a specific point in the image which was close to one of the four vertices we get when we apply the rule of thirds. In addition to this, other image elements reinforce this point. The elements are all geared in a certain way toward this focal point, giving flow and rhythm to the painting.



01



02

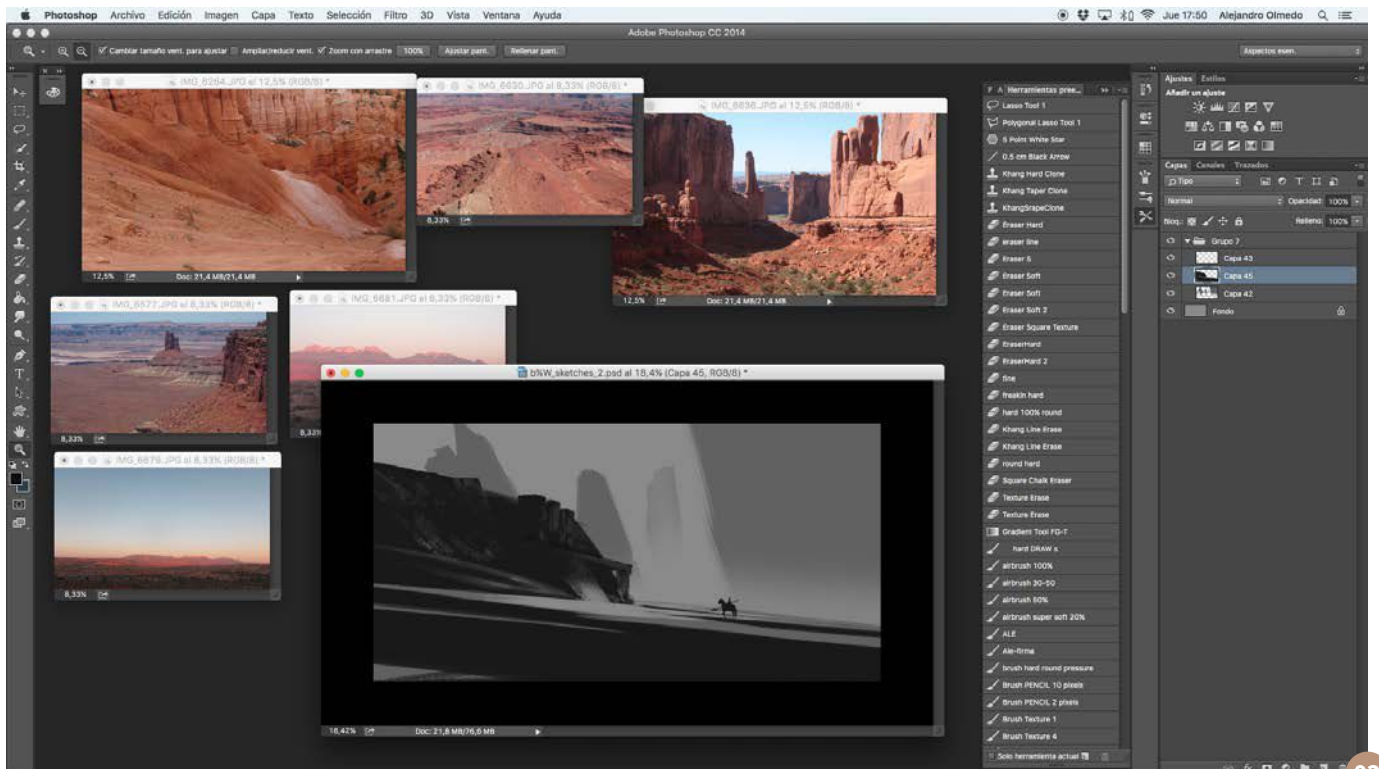
Another rule of design is to seek balance between the big, medium and small shapes. Remember that the medium and small shapes are normally the more detailed ones.

03 Choose color and mood: Once I have the black and white sketch, the first thing that comes to my mind is a desert image on which could be the ruins of a temple, or an ancient castle and a mild, warm light affecting the knight and his horse. To get all of these colors and textures quickly, I go to one of my reference folders and choose the one best suited to my idea. In this case they are from a free pack of

photos of South-west America that the great Noah Bradley has taken and shared. I opened all of them in Photoshop and prepared the workspace to save time later on.

04 First color pass: Before I start to add photos to the drawing, it is appropriate to create a little color base on each of the layers. In this case it is divided into four layers: the mountains in the background, the middle ground and the knight. I can easily add color above by creating a new layer and applying a Clipping Mask, which will keep us from painting only inside the base layer. Press Alt and click between the ►

- 01** Black and white sketches exploring some fantasy environment concepts
- 02** The basic rules of composition help to create better paintings
- 03** Look for and prepare photos to save time in your work process
- 04** Add colors above the main layers before adding photo textures



03



04

two layers. Once this is done I start to paint on this layer with different textured brushes picking colors from the photo references.

05 Background textures: Once I have the base color I can begin to include some textures. I start with the mountains in the background because they don't require much detail. I don't want them to call much attention or distract the viewer from the focal points. I choose a picture with large vertical cracks that help to emphasize the size and distance between the mountains and the foreground. As I don't need a lot of contrast here due to the distance, it's preferable to use this layer on the blending mode Lighting or similar, showing only the brighter parts of the photo.

06 Sky and ambient elements: I look for some variety in the color which will also coincided with the time of day I have in mind for the image, a sunset. I cut out a sky from one of the references and paste it over the background layer. As the values of the sky are a little darker than the mountains, I decide to darken them by applying a blue gradient on top using a Multiply mode layer. I also hint at a bluish fog or clouds over all the layers blending the silhouettes of the mountains with the background a bit more. These silhouettes can be defined by erasing the parts that I didn't like.

07 Mid-ground photo-texturing: The next step is to include pictures in the mid-ground, also applying Clipping Masks. By using different blending modes and transforming photos I get shapes that resemble some sort of construction. This gives the impression of what



05

⚡ PRO TIP

The moment of inspiration

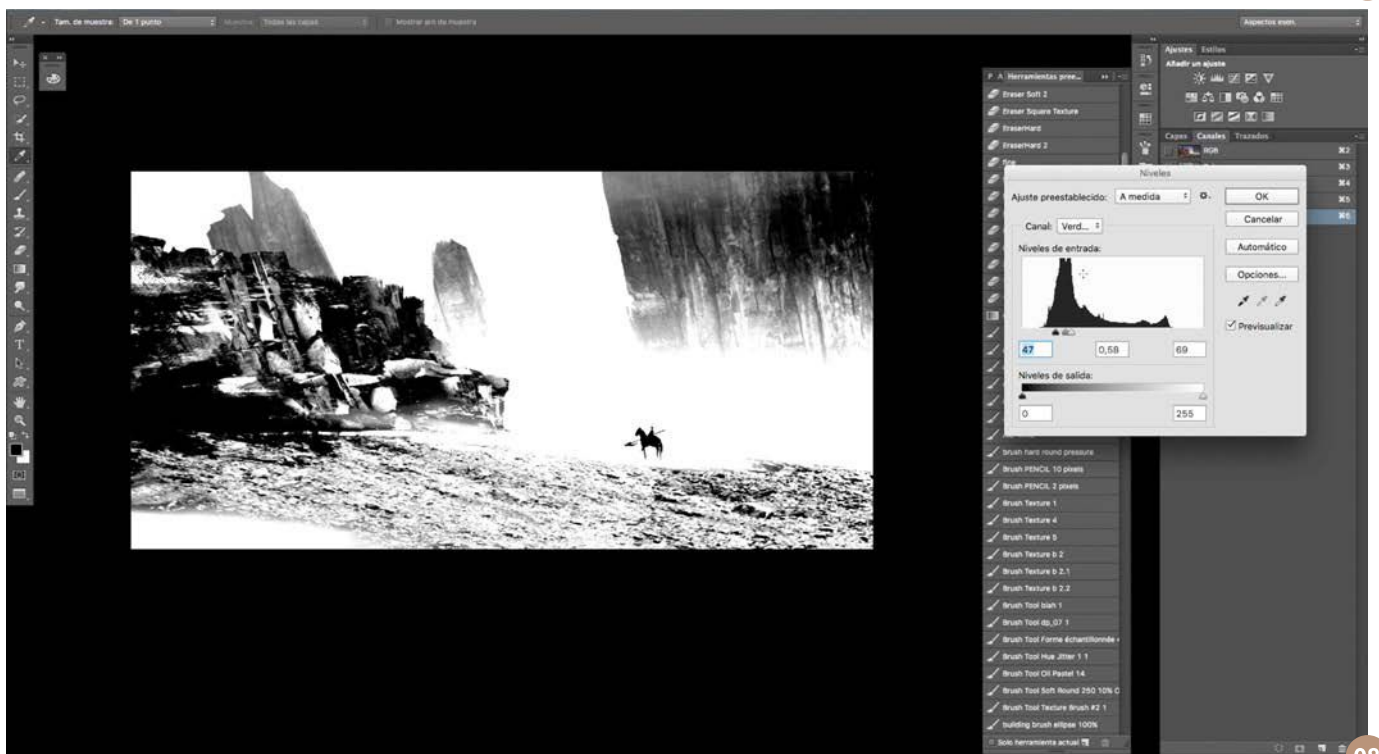
Another thing I've learned over time is that by not forcing an idea the painting will be better. So I give myself about 30 minutes to decide if what I'm painting is worth continuing with or not. Don't hesitate to discard ideas, it can save you a disappointment later after hours of work.



06



07



08

could look like a door or gate with columns, walls and ceilings.

This time I need more contrast in the textures so I use blending modes such as Overlay, Soft Light or Darken. I also paint some orange hues close to the knight giving more attention to him.

08 Channel selection: Now that I have textures and shapes on which to work, it is the moment to use channels. I only need to choose the channel with the most contrast,

duplicate it and use Levels to push the contrast even more to obtain an almost two value picture. This will separate the brighter and darker areas of the image. By clicking on the layer while pressing Cmd (Ctrl in windows) I get a selection of the areas that appear white in the image. I use this option when I want to paint some colors only in the brighter or darker areas.

09 Color variation: Using the selections that come with the use of channels, I add more color variety in the most illuminated ►

05 Consider the atmosphere, scale, contrast and values when adding textures

06 The sky and ambient elements define the mood of the painting

07 Use contrast, colors and details to draw attention to the mid-ground

08 Channels are a simple way to select brighter or darker areas

parts, such as the top faces of the rocks. This step is very important to blend the textures added in the previous steps with the general atmosphere of the picture. I need to match the colors, lights and shadows.

These selections are also really useful when you want to darken or lighten a specific part of an image. In this case I don't want the bright areas of the left so I paint over them with desaturated and darker tones, focusing the spotlight where I need.

10 **Begin defining elements:** In this step I begin to define a bit more the design of the building. To do this, I use a brush with 100% opacity and hardness but with some texture on the edges.

PRO TIP

Stay loose and open minded

When doing quick practice sketches or doodling an idea for a concept it is recommendable to be open minded and not close on a fixed idea. Sometimes you can lose more time trying to reflect that idea than discovering another one among the abstractions of your sketch.

Using the darker colors from the textures I start to paint the shadows. I have in mind that the light source should come from the left of the image, focusing on what could be the doors, gates or even windows made with stones to give the impression that the pile of rocks is a hollow building. Again I put more detail closer to the door; near the focal point.

11 **Foreground textures:** At this stage I think the foreground needs more contrast as well, so I apply another photo texture. After several attempts and distorting it a lot, I found that this has helped with the composition because of the diagonal lines pointing to the main focus. It has also helped to give more perspective to the field.



09



10



11



12

Since I don't need the brighter areas of the photo I use it as a Darken layer. I erase the unnecessary parts of the photo and adjust the saturation and values to fit better with the painting.

12 Free-painting step: Now the base of the drawing is almost complete, and I am clear about the mood, the lighting and the colors, I start to paint with more freedom. Using different texture brushes I paint over almost everything with a low opacity, blending the textures a bit more. I add some blue hues around the corner

of the image enriching the color palette too. I then define the line between the floor and the building, making it clearer, and add more design to the textures of the foreground leading the eyes to the focal point.

13 Second channel selection: After the previous step I notice the columns of the main entrance door are a little bit flat and less detailed. So I create another selection using channels again and paint over with some textured and splattered brushes. ▶

09 Blend textures with sky tones to create ambient light

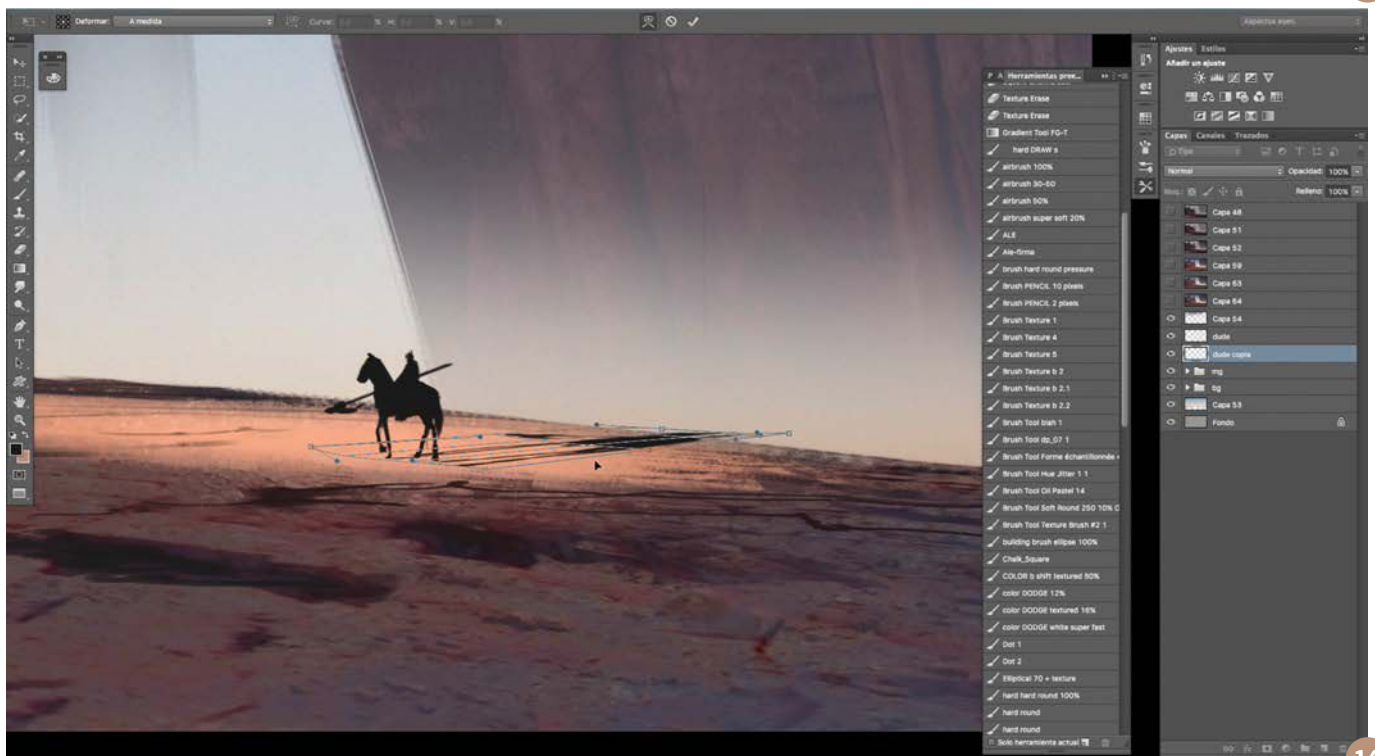
10 Define volume and shapes using the darkest colors

11 Masking a photo texture into the foreground helps to focus the image

12 Use texture brushes and more color variety to unify the textures



13



14

I use multiple colors by varying both the hue and values, giving more realism to the texture and controlling even better where I want the most prominent highlights. I also define some edges and structures, a design on the door, where I introduce a new shape element by painting round, ornamented structures.

14 Redefine the character: The first thing I do to redefine the character is to define the silhouette, painting the horse's legs and ears, and adding details like the shape of the feet

of the character hanging from the horse. I also add a shadow, simply duplicating the layer and transforming it, making it fit better according to the light source.

One important thing in the design of animals is to learn a little about the animal's anatomy and structure, in this case I have to think about the horse's legs. If you paint the anatomy wrong, it'll draw a lot of attention from the viewer, and it will quickly be clear that there is something strange in the picture.

15 Coloring the focal point: Using Clipping Masks I start to add some colors on top of the horse/knight layer. At first I start with the horse, painting some brown and oranges as the neutral color and adding some bluish tones on top of the back. Then I go for a red color for the knight's cape to catch more attention.

Again I have in mind ambient light as I'm painting on the top faces of the silhouette. I also change the main silhouette while adding more details such as the reins, or a detailed cloak for the horse.



15

“To focus on the center of the painting, I select the outer margin of the image with the Marquee tool and add Feather with a radius of about 85%”

16 Adding details: As the character is really small and the viewer won't be able to see all the details, it is unnecessary to add photo textures on its design. Instead I just add some brushstrokes to suggest different shapes, colors and lights depending on the different materials. However this means I need to add more highlights to the figure. I use a Color Dodge brush on the armor since it's done with a reflective material, but not on other parts such as the cape or the horse.



16

17 Checking the values: In this point of the process, when almost everything is complete, I start thinking of the overall feeling of the painting. I look at whether the values or saturations are right or not. To easily check it, I create a new layer filled with black above everything and change the blending mode to Saturation, noting the image in black and white. By viewing the image this way I can control better whether the values are right or not. Here, the background is a bit dark so I clear it using a Gradient layer, giving more depth to the image. ►

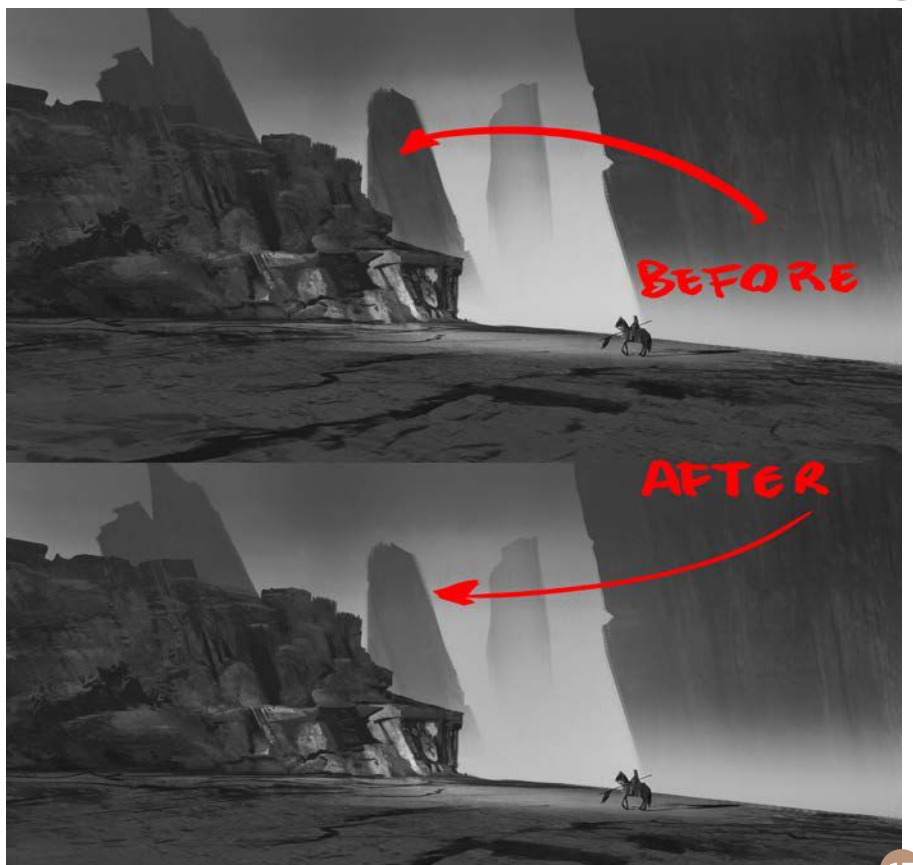
13 Create another channel selection to enrich the colors and textures in brighter areas

14 Refine the character, copying and pasting it with Free Transform to make shadows

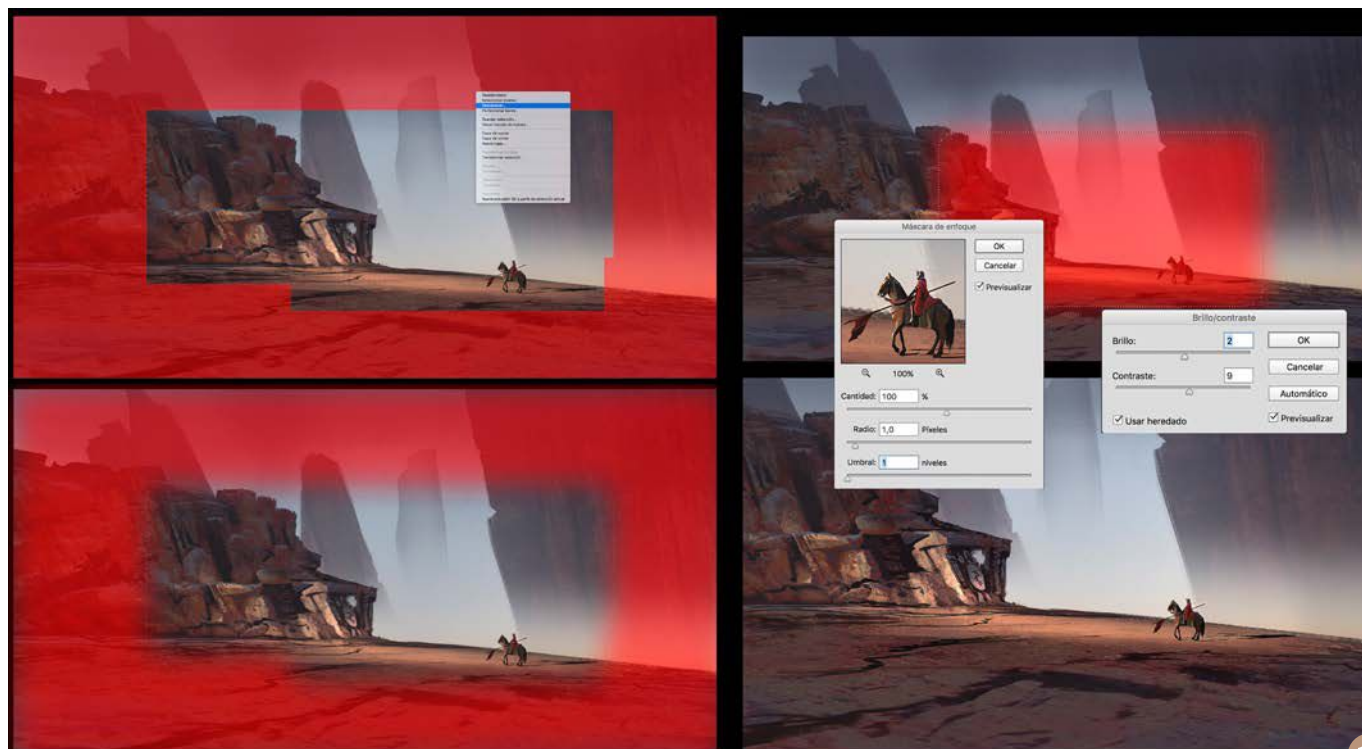
15 Roughly paint the focal point in stages to suggest shapes and colors

16 Small dots and Color Dodge will add to your focal point prominence

17 Checking the values shows that the background is a bit dark



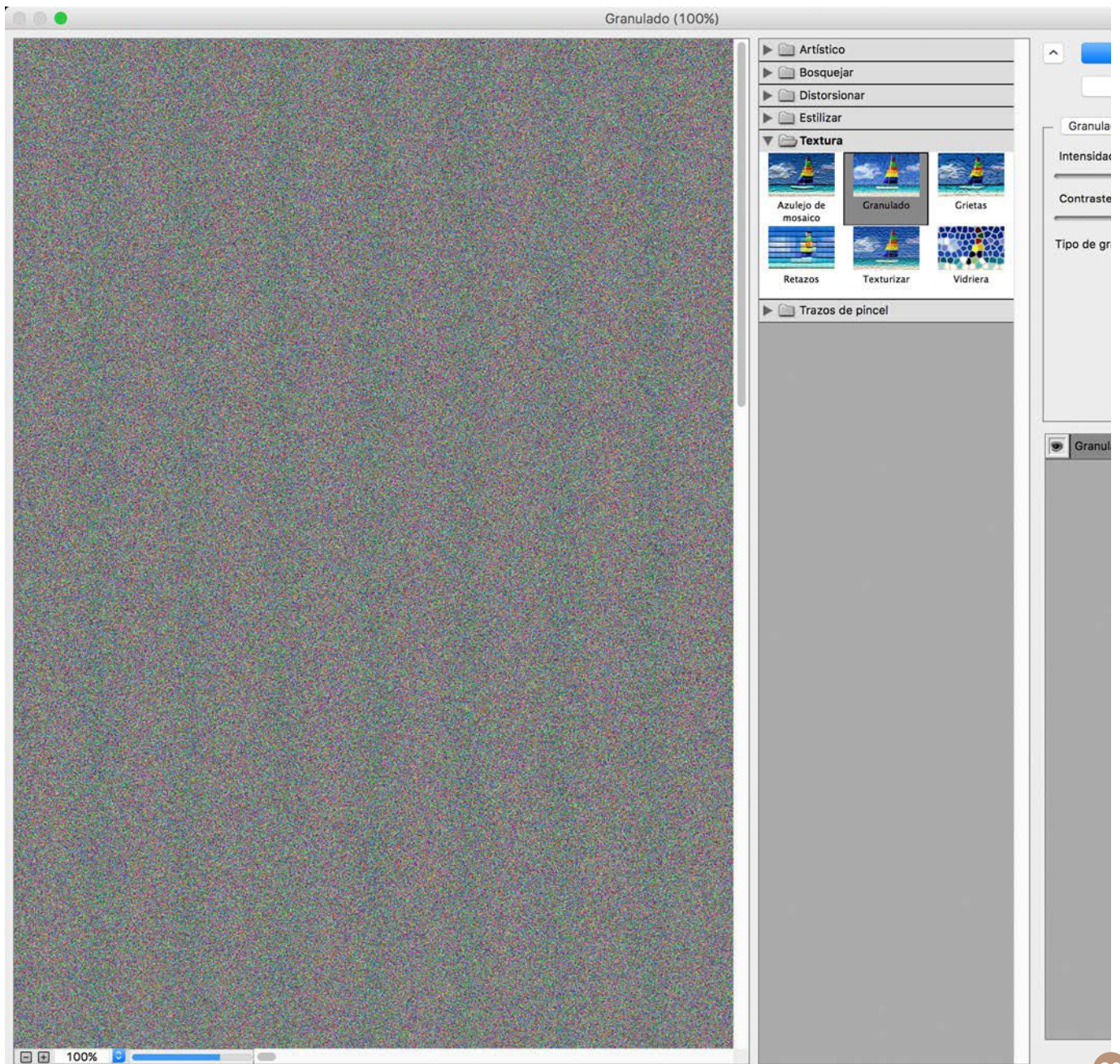
17



18



19



18 General adjustments: Now that the values are right I merge everything into a new layer (Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E) and make some adjustments. As I want the viewer to focus on the center of the painting, I select the outer margin of the image with the Marquee tool and add Feather with a radius of about 85%. I then copy and merge in a new layer and make it darker and desaturated. I do the same with the center of the painting, but instead of darkening and desaturating it, I do a Brighter/Contrast adjustment and add an Unsharp mask making it pop.

19 Last minute changes: While doing the adjustments I realize I'm not really happy with the position of the flag. So I drastically change it to a vertical position. I quickly paint a

kind of coat of arms with the form of an animal, something like typical lions or horses used by the knights of the Middle Ages on their banners. I also add more green details on the reins and some tacks in the straps. After these changes I redo the previous step adding more contrast and the Unsharp mask.

20 Final touches: Before calling it done, I spend a couple of minutes blurring some sharp edges of the image using the Smudge tool. With this, we take prominence to the outer sides of the image leaving it more sharp and focused at the focal points.

As a last step, before signing, I create an overlay layer filled with gray at 50% value and give it a grainy filter. By adjusting the opacity of this layer I

create a noise in the image that help us to merge all the colors and textures of the painting better. And that's it, done! I had fun painting this scene and I hope you have found it helpful and interesting too. ●

18 Feather selections to soften the edges and make focal point adjustments

19 The flag is adjusted at the last minute to a vertical position

20 Adding a grainy filter helps to blend the colors and textures

20



Luc
The

The Artist



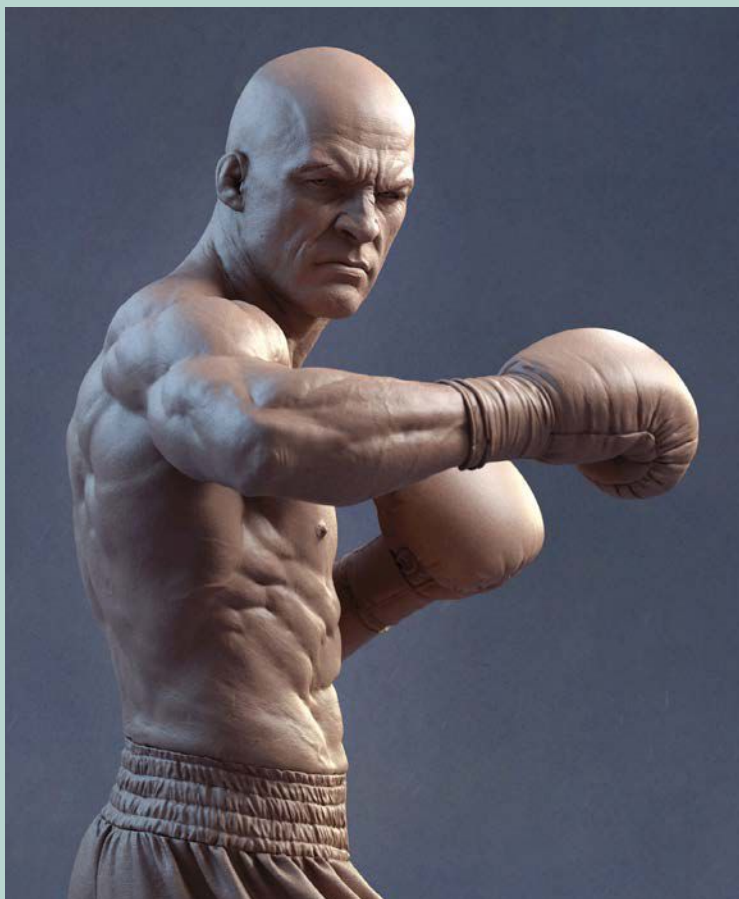
Alejandro Olmedo

[artstation.com/artist/
alex_olmedo](http://artstation.com/artist/alex_olmedo)



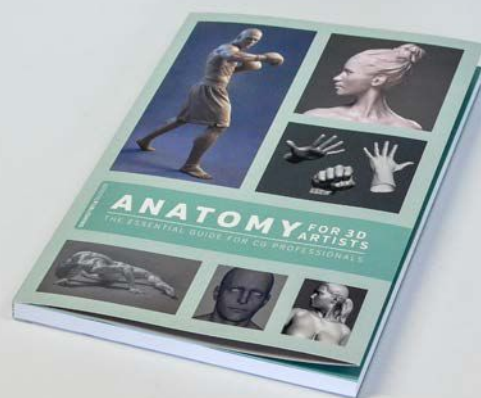
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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE FOR CG PROFESSIONALS



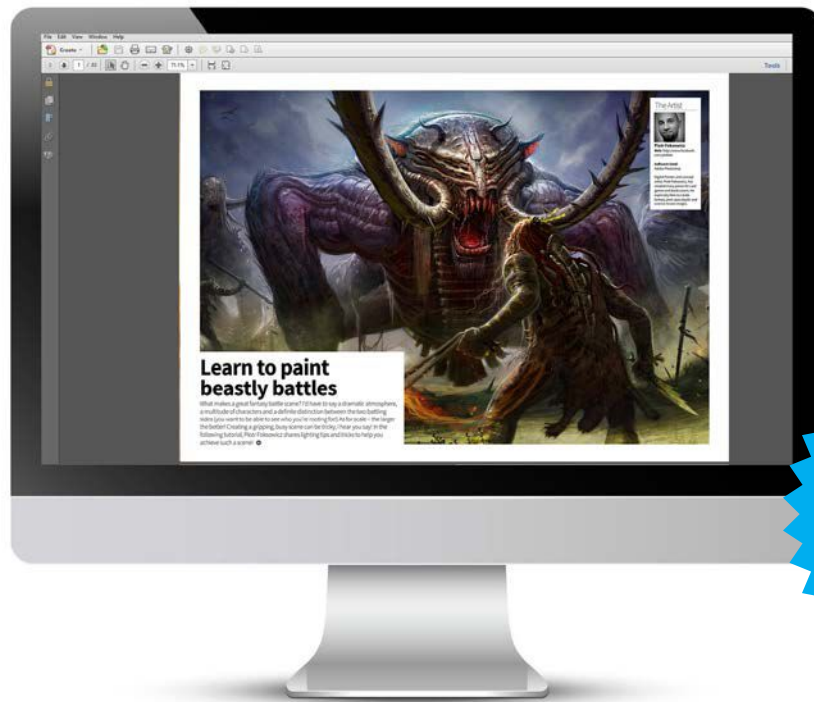
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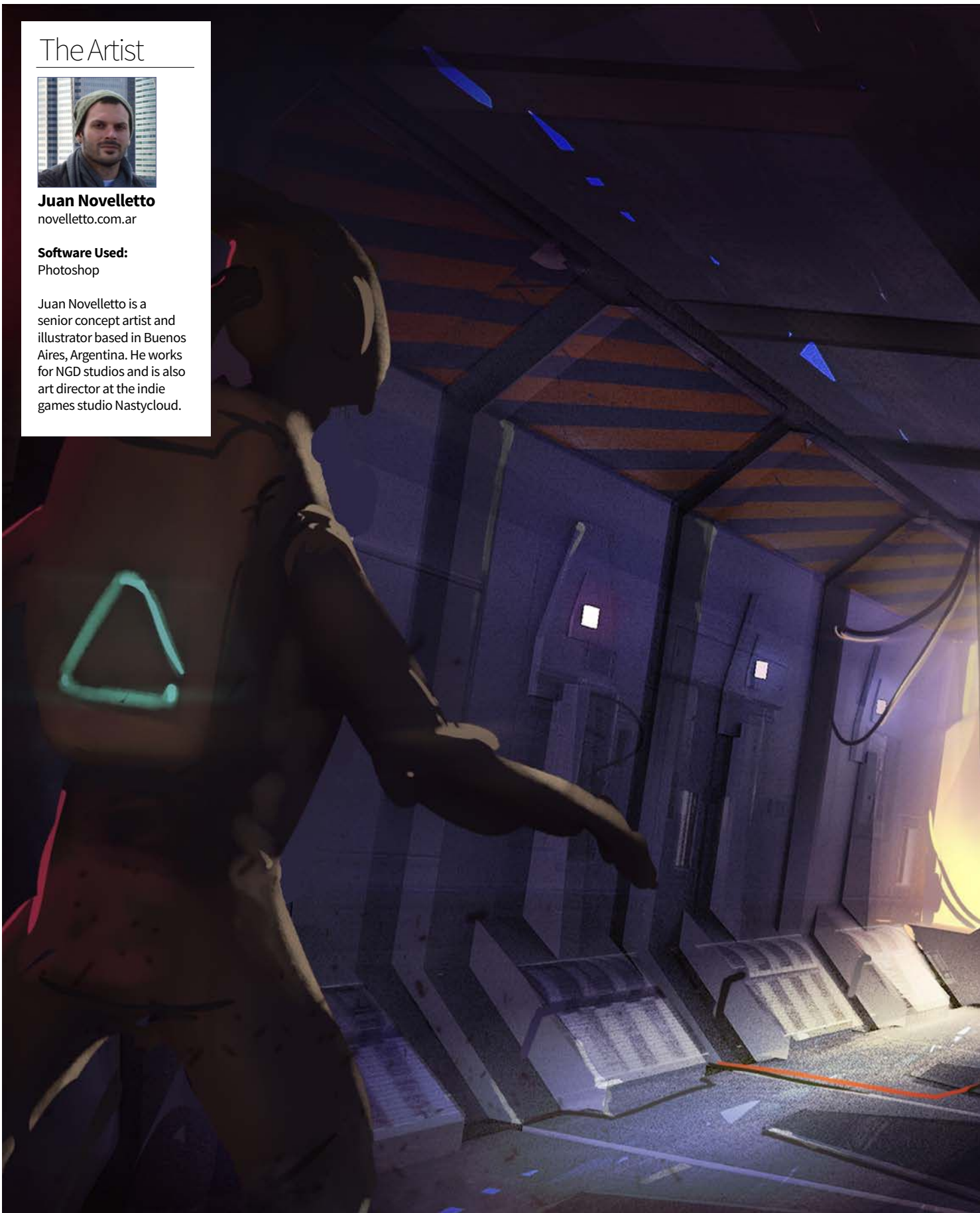
The Artist



Juan Novelletto
novelletto.com.ar

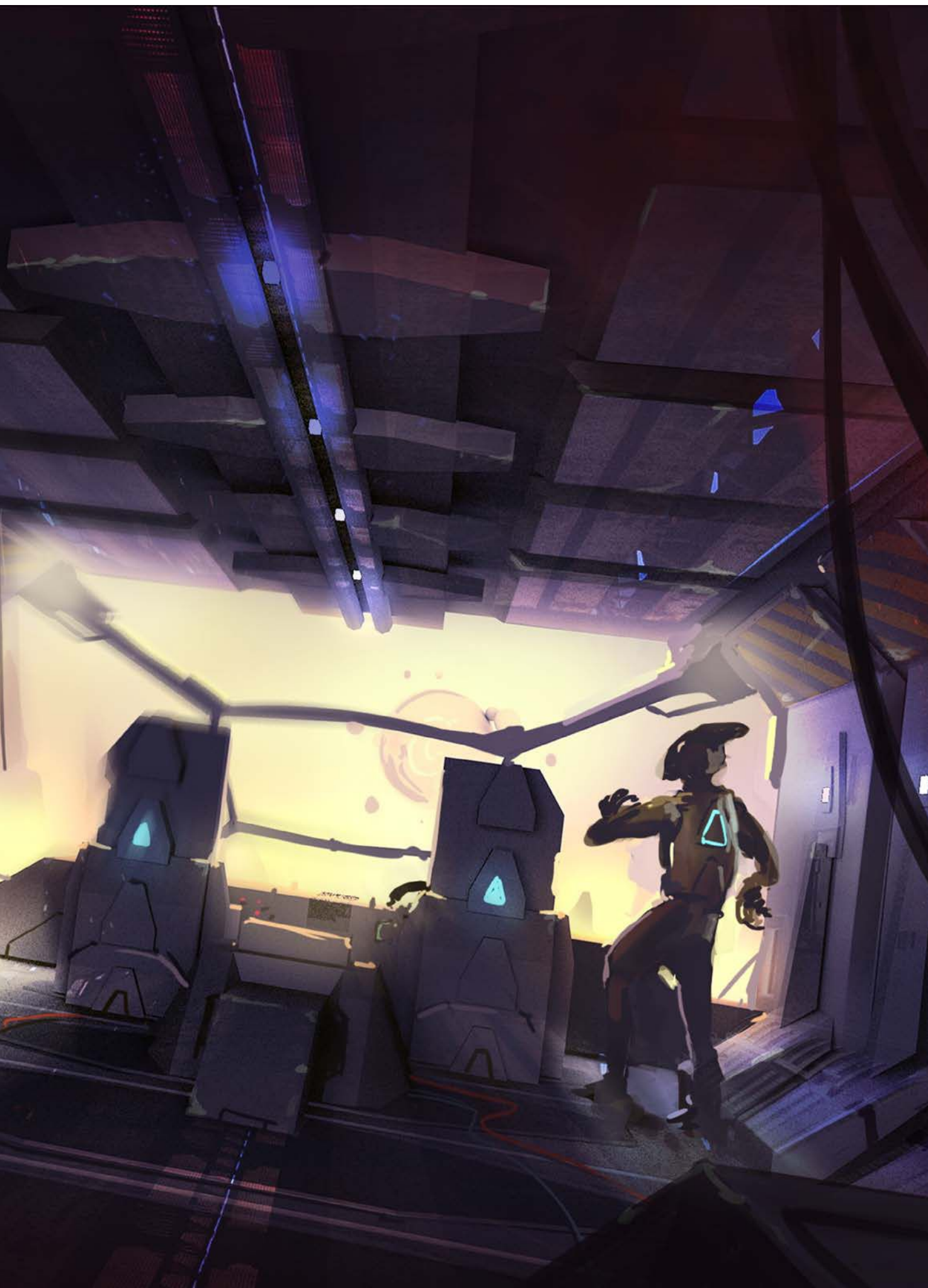
Software Used:
Photoshop

Juan Novelletto is a senior concept artist and illustrator based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He works for NGD studios and is also art director at the indie games studio Nastycloud.



Play with perspective

Discover how different perspectives can be used to give your sci-fi scenes a dynamic feel in this handy tutorial from Juan Novelletto ▶



Perfect the use of perspective in your artwork...

Hello again! We continue our series on sci-fi fundamentals, but this time focusing on perspective. Perspective is an optical illusion that allows us to represent three dimensions in a two dimensional image. As it is an illusion, there are tricks and techniques to master it, since we ourselves must build it.

Throughout the tutorial, you will see some of these tricks and common mistakes that can happen at the time we lay out the perspective in our image. However, nowadays it is very common that we use 3D software to quickly plant a base with the perspective already given. With this we save time and achieve realistic results. But even though using 3D software solves much of the construction of perspective, it does not tell us anything about what we want to show with it. We can use

perspective to change the narrative of our image, for example, moving the horizon line and thus changing the point of view.

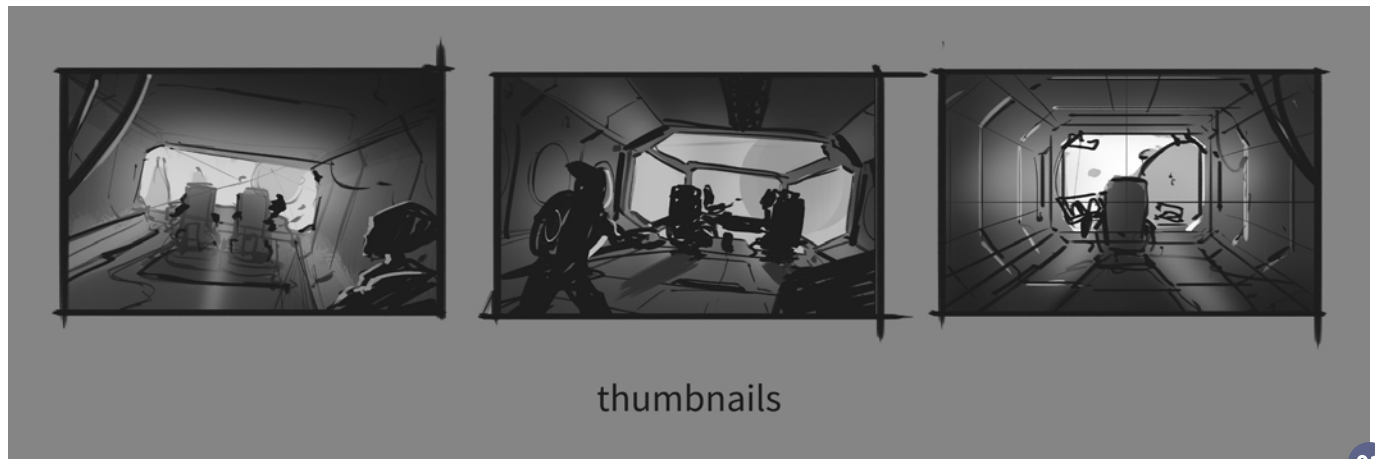
Some of the tricks that you will see are how repetition helps to generate a more believable scene, and also how to correctly locate the characters within the scene, without breaking the perspective (an error which is quite common). You will also review the prospects of using one, two or more points, and how they work on the image. For this tutorial I will face the concept created in the first tutorial (featured in 2dartist Issue 121) from a different angle, to get the most out of perspective, and also to continue enriching the idea that I have built previously.

01 Thumbnails: Although I explored the idea of the thumbnails in the last tutorial, as I said previously, I like to start a concept by sketching some ideas. As you may remember, we

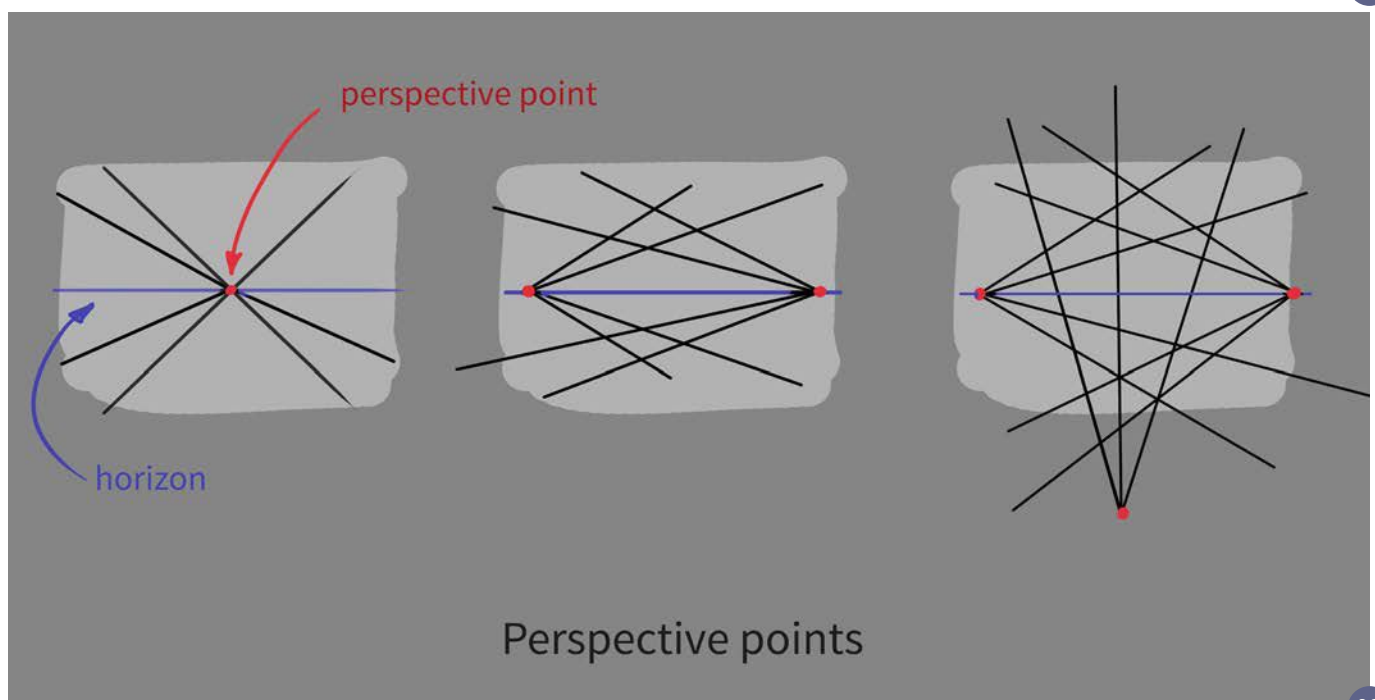
have a ship crashed in a strange world, and a pilot surprised by an object floating in the air. What if we tell a little about what happened previously in the story?

Another tip that I told you in the last tutorial is that a way to generate intrigue is to generate an unknown in an image, showing a moment before or after an event. In this case I will sketch ideas where you see the interior of the ship just before it crashed on the planet. From this viewpoint, you can see the command with a pair of seats for pilot and copilot, and some characters in the scene.

The technique is the same one used in the previous tutorial: thumbnail images, with a few values and some little definite forms. Remember that, more than anything, you want to have an idea of what is going to be in the scene and where it will be located on the canvas. Sci-fi interiors are a good example of the kind of concept needed to apply perspective.



01



Perspective points

02

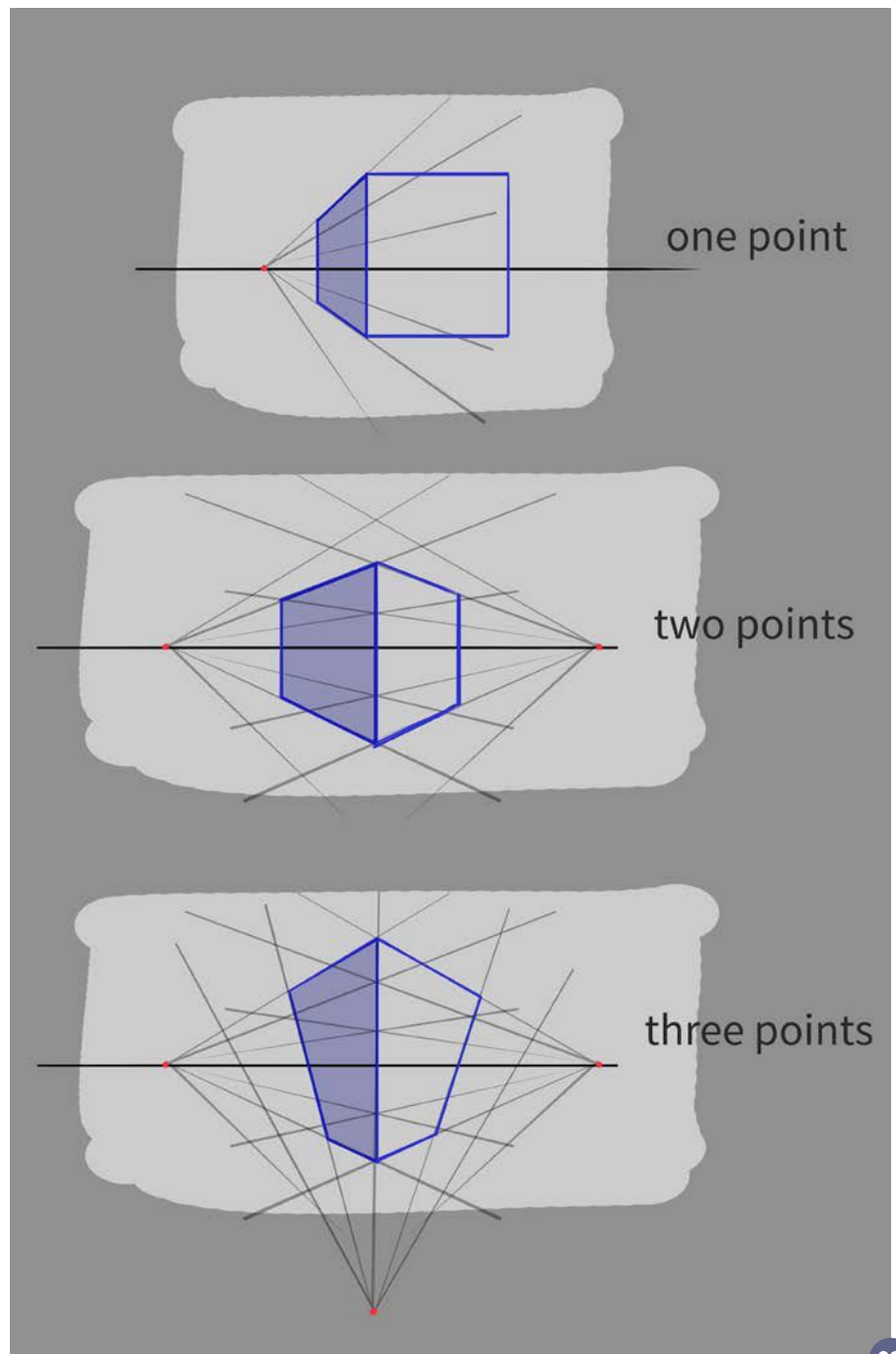
02 **Perspective points:** Before starting with the concept I will review some of the basic rules of perspective. One of them is the location of the points of perspective in the canvas. The more points of perspective you add, the more complex the scene will be, but also it will have more dynamism. However, if you add too many points, it is likely that your image will end up deformed.

In general, most of the concepts you are going to see have one, two or three points of perspective. Each of these perspectives is more common in certain scenes. For example, you will find many concepts with only one point have large aisles, or are corridors of spaceships. In this type of perspective, we are standing right in front of the objects and that is why we see a flat face. In general it is more common to find images with two points of perspective, especially in environments. Three point perspective is used to generate images that tend to be more dynamic or deform the image.

03 **Place shapes in a grid:** I have created three grids of perspective as an example. What I do now is locate the objects for the scene within them. Items will vary according to which grid you decide to use, since what you are choosing actually is where the viewer will observe the scene from: from the front of the object, from the side, or from above it.

To demonstrate this I have used a primitive form, but obviously the complexity will be greater the more objects that are added to the scene. This is why I always recommend having a top layer with a grid; so that you can activate it whenever you need an aid to drawing objects in perspective.

04 **Points of view:** I start to work on the perspective and the angle that I am going to use for the image. As a first measure, I move the horizon line in the composition and all the perspective is altered in this way. When I move the horizon line, what I am doing is moving the point of view of the camera. For example, if ►



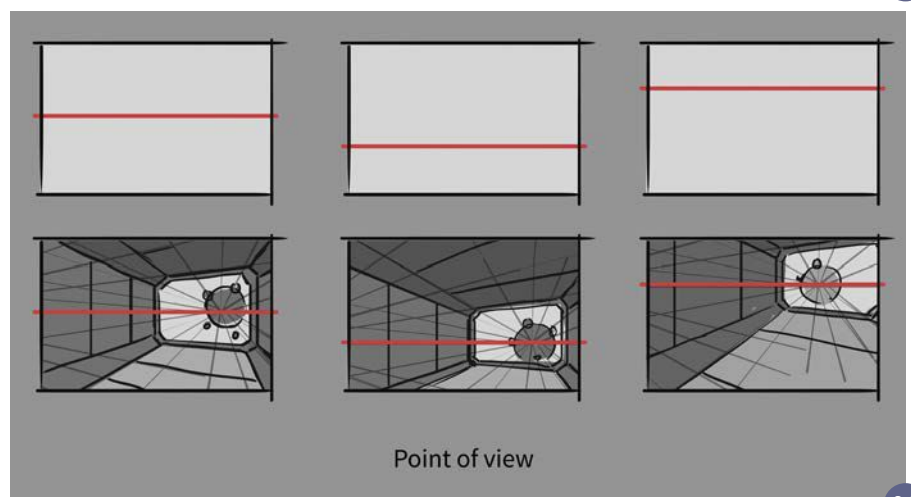
03

01 Three thumbnails explore varying the camera positions for the scene

02 From left to right: perspective with one, two and three vanishing points

03 Objects can seem very different according to the perspective used

04 Horizon lines affect how grids with a physical space are viewed



04

the horizon is above, the person who is watching is tall. If this is in the middle the viewer, it could be a child or a person of average height; if this very low, they could be an animal.

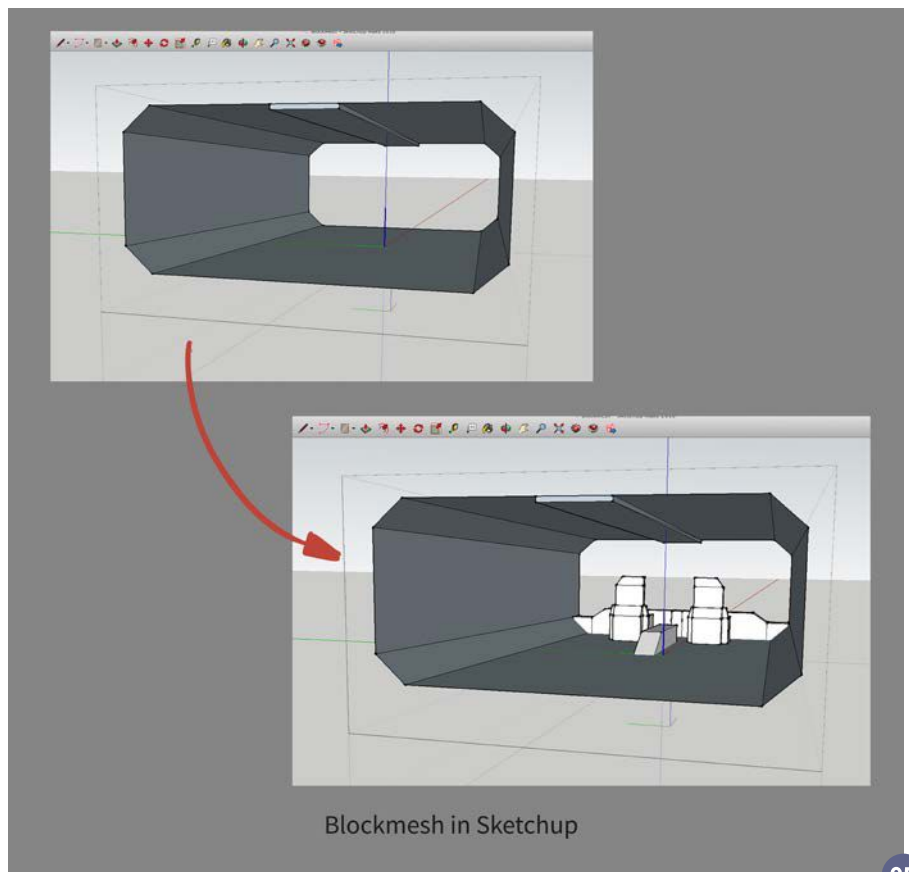
Point of view is very important, as you can see, since we're going to be giving a role to the viewer who is looking at the image. With these points of view we can play infinitely, so now is when I recommend that you use some simple 3D software such as SketchUp, which is going to allow you to make some simple models to help you find the best camera for your composition in a very fast way.

05 Blockmesh in SketchUp: As I said previously in this tutorial, to quickly build a base with the proper perspective, you can use 3D software. Now I use the 2016 SketchUp free for Mac OS X, but you can use any version, since I will only be using basic tools here. Also I recommend Blender which is a very complete, free 3D software and open source.

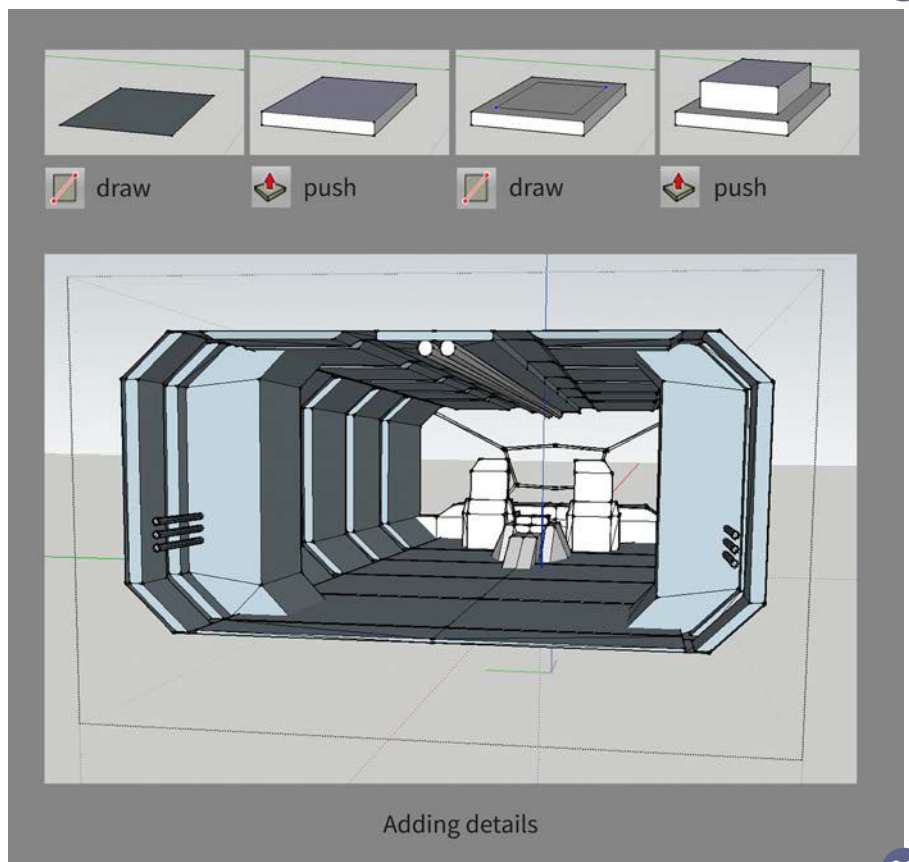
I build the box which contains the space of the interior of the ship with SketchUp modeling tools. This is the base for the scene which I then continue to add details too. I add elements such as the pilots' seats, and a kind of command center for driving the ship. At this stage I will keep everything in simple forms, since I only want to make it a very fast base to get the forms with a correct perspective, and also to test the location of the camera and elements within the scene.

06 Add some details: I already have a solid base which I can use to help me begin to give some more details. The idea is to save the time that it would normally take to place these shapes in the perspective grid. However, despite these being details, they must be kept simple and then be reworked when it is time to start painting. I cut big faces in a symmetrical way and then extrude them, generating some plates protruding from the wall, floor and ceiling. At this stage the most advisable thing to do is to look for references from other artists, films, and even vehicles or military bases from reality. You also need to think about what you are going to tell in the scene and be careful not to overload it with information in the details, as this can deflect the tension of the image.

Basically with cut and extrude you are going to be able to make all the details you need. I put some tubes in the ceiling to break the straight lines, just a small detail, because I still want that straight line to remain dominant. I also add a few walls in the foreground to give more space.



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07 Generate patterns: To strengthen the design, and set it apart with a more alien touch, I will design a symbol. It will be a simple

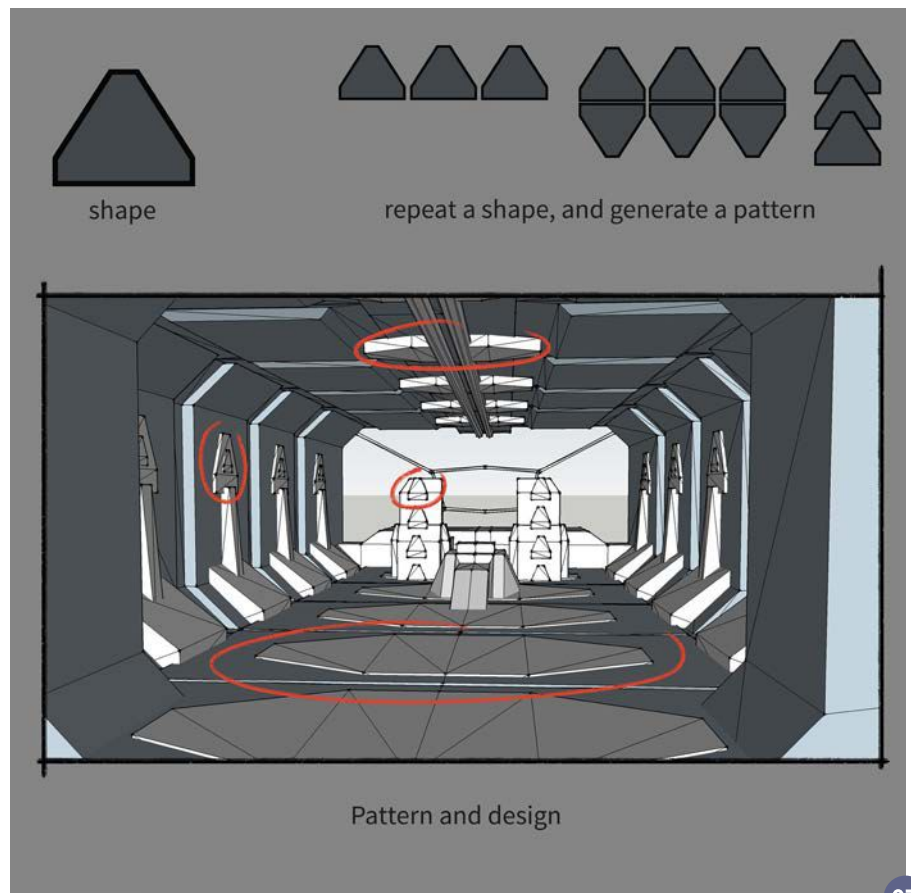
symbol but it will be recognizable when you observe it. I do a sort of triangle, and now with this design begin to test how to combine it to

create patterns. The idea of generating a pattern is that you can use it in a design to give the scene coherence, because those forms will be related between them. We can use this pattern in our characters' costumes, repeat them on the floors, and use them on a weapon, and so on.

In this case, I use the design on the pilot and co-pilot seats, repeating them several times. But I also use it on the walls, to be used as light supports, and in a subtle way, use the pattern on the floor and ceiling, mirroring the design. This exercise is really fun and when you do it, you will notice your concepts gain consistency. You can also research architectural styles to reinforce this point, such as the Art Nouveau style for example.

08 Character in the scene: It is time to put the characters into the scene so that I can choose the best angle to make the over-paint on the 3D base from.

For this I use only reference models, since I will do them almost entirely in 2D. It is interesting to see how the different scales work, and also how perspective affects figures. This is generally where one fails at the beginning, when the scenes become more complex. I put a character in the foreground, and another farther way, near the end of the interior. With this, I can show in a single image the same object (in this case a person!) and give an idea of the scale of the place, since they are both references. This is a good practice to give a correct idea of spatiality. ►

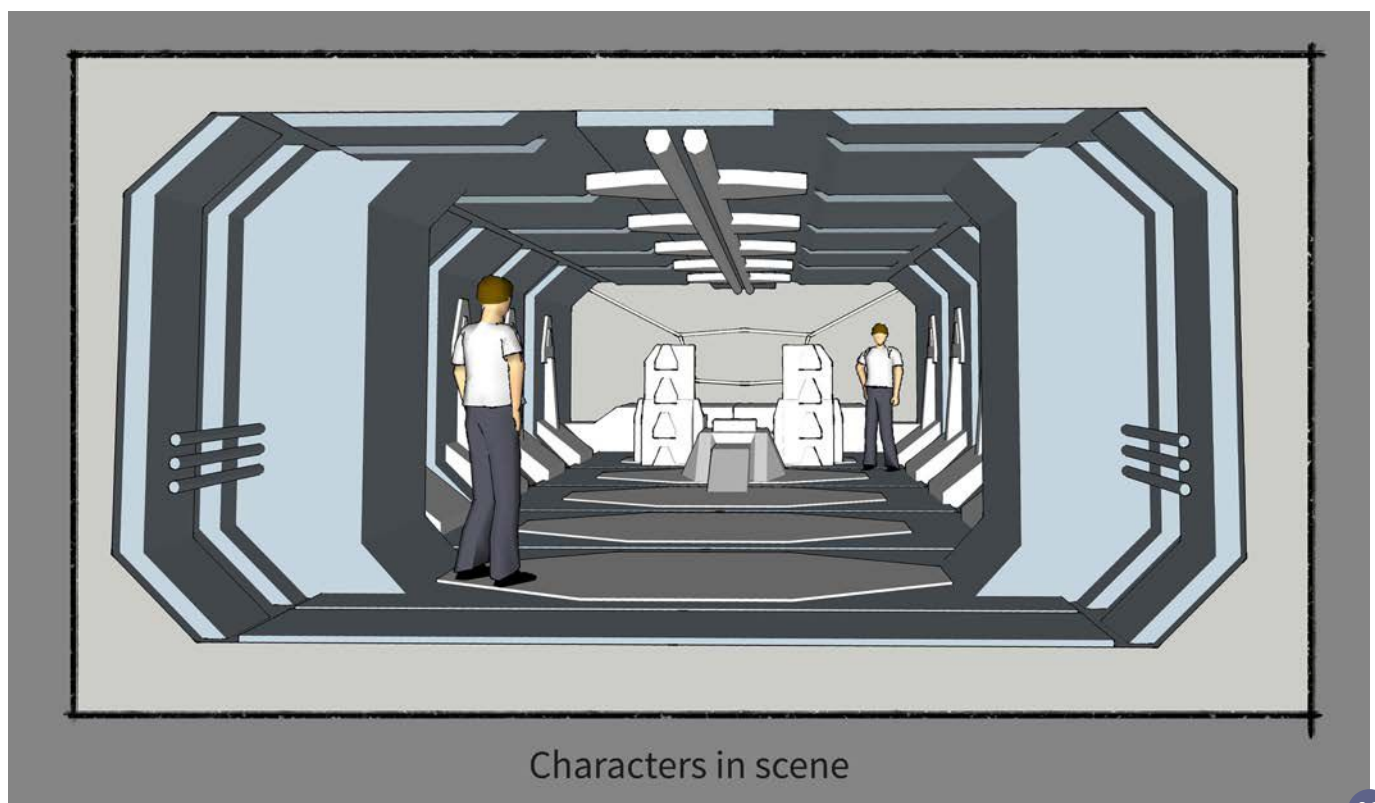


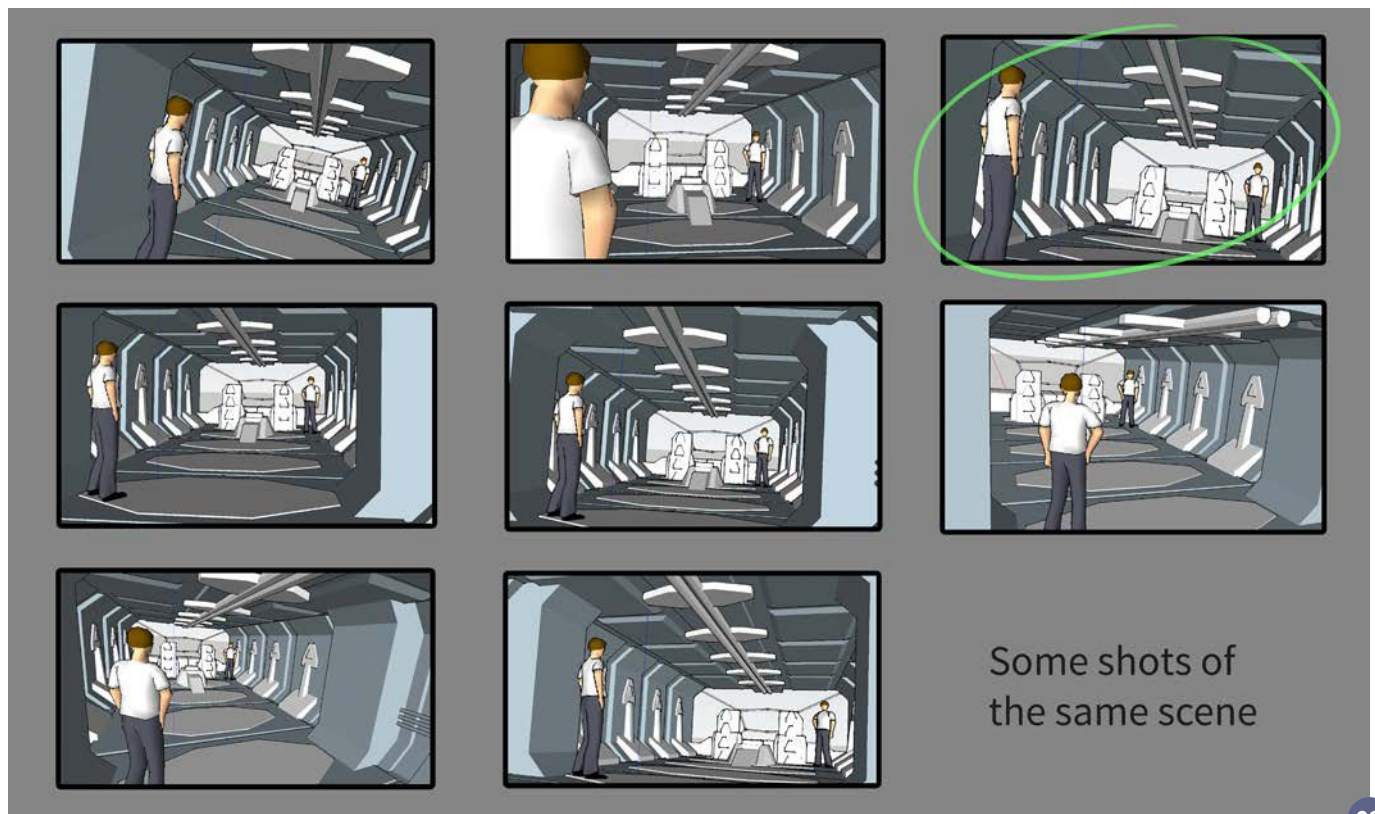
05 Always start with big basic shapes then add detail with little shapes

07 Combine the designs to generate patterns across the scene

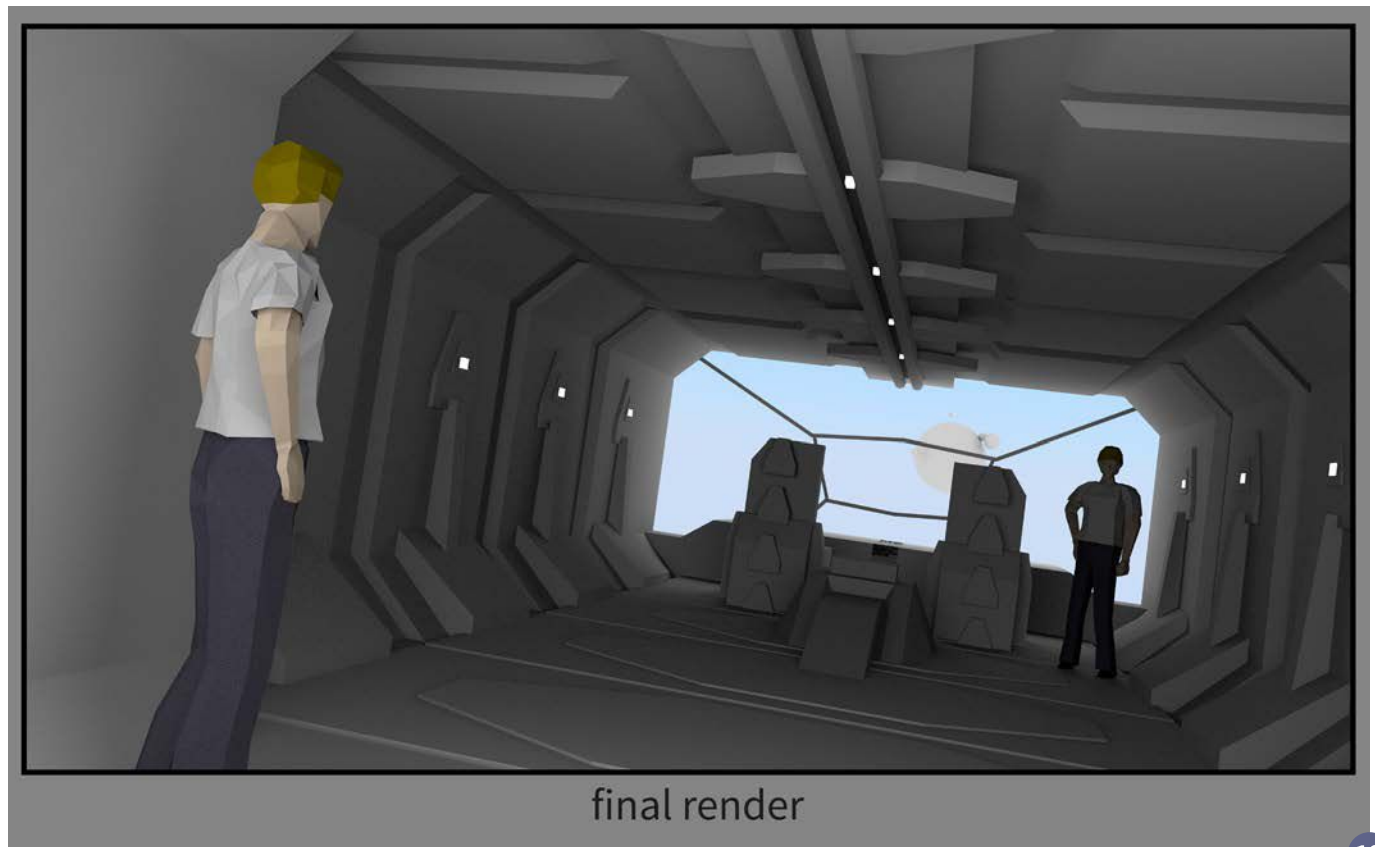
06 With two steps, drawing and extruding, you can resolve your base in 3D

08 Add reference models to give scale to the scene





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“I make nine shots by moving the horizon axis and even bend it by moving the camera to the left or right”

09 Choose the camera: Now I am going to take full advantage of the use of 3D. Within SketchUp I move on to the panning and rotation on the scene. This gives me several shots from which I can choose which I like the most, and which I think will relate better to what I want

to tell in this picture. I make nine shots by moving the horizon axis and even bend it by moving the camera to the left or right. It is important that the characters are not all on the same side, because, as we saw in the tutorial on composition, this will affect the balance of the image.

Once these shots are done, I put them all on the same canvas, the size of thumbnails, and I choose which shot is my favorite. The image I choose is viewed from an angle that allows you to observe the details of the interior of the ship well, but also retains in focus where this ship is going. This shot is helped by the straight lines that form the composition, but in addition, we have characters that are close and in the distance to give scale.

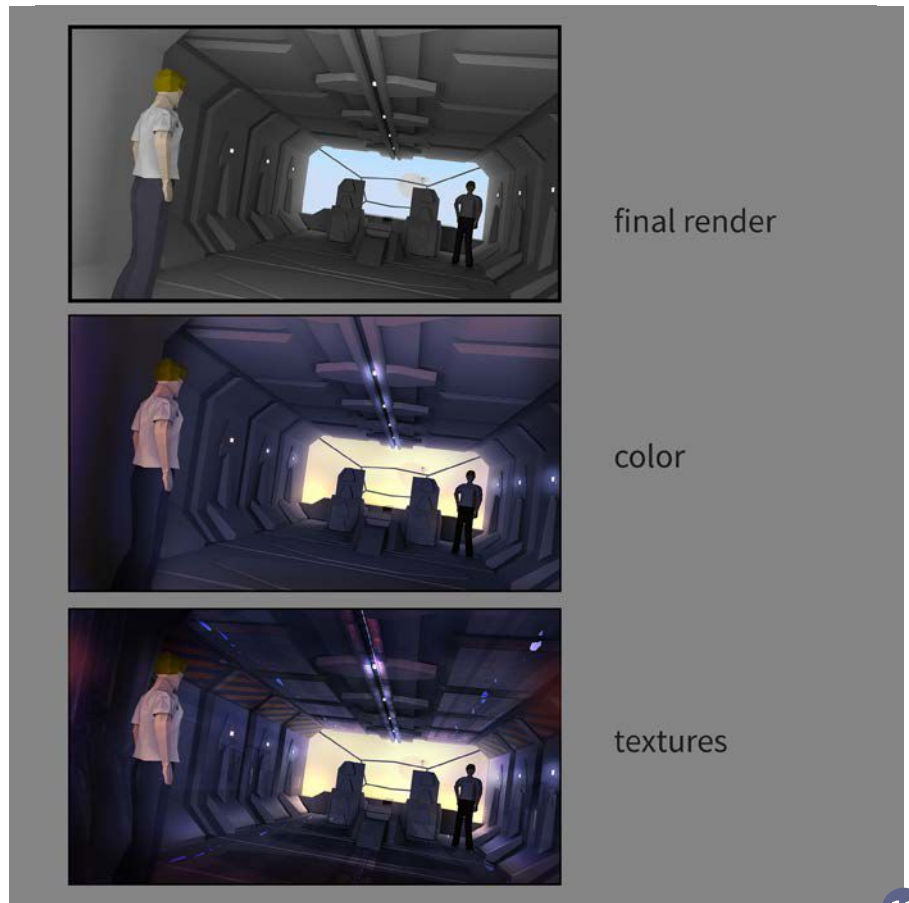
10 Final render: Everything is ready to start with the over-paint now, but before that, I make a render of the scene so there are some shadows that give more realism to the concept. There are many engines to SketchUp render, many of them free, which will provide tools for our task. Twilight Render is the one I use in this screenshot, which also allows me to add lights quite intuitively.

I add a few small lights on the walls and on the ceiling, once more in a repeated way to reinforce the design of the interior of the ship. I also add a sky and the strange object that attracted us to the planet. The render should be done in a high resolution, even though it is going to consume more resources of our computer, we will achieve more quality.

11 Color base, light and textures: I'm beginning to work in 2D on the final render I did in the previous step. The first thing I do is add a color base using a Gradient map (as we saw in the composition tutorial). Then, I add more illuminated areas where the small lamps are with an Overlay layer, and darker areas too, such as the area next to the camera. With a layer in the blend mode Darken, I reduce the lights a bit and add chromatic variety.

Once the color base is ready, I proceed with using textures to give more information and generate interesting shapes on the artifacts. Ideally, you should look for photos that have a similar perspective when doing this, but in case you do not find any, you can use the Transform tool to adjust the texture. I add textures of underground tunnels, machines, and industrial elements, and so on. This step does not have to end yet, since you can add textures until you are satisfied, however I will continue to provide details with the brush and change the characters for some aliens.

12 Final details: I replace the reference figures for aliens then add some lights and details like the design patterns on their backpacks. I add a few cables in the foreground to give proximity. I apply the filter Motion Blur to give a sense of movement to the image and with this we gain some dynamism, strengthening the

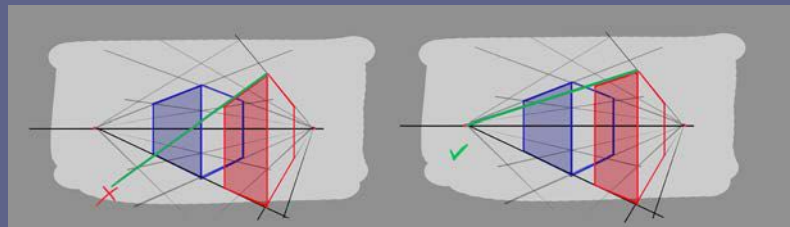


11

PRO TIP Always check guidelines

You should always check the perspective guidelines so your objects respect the perspective. A typical mistake is to draw and then find that the lines act kind of oddly since they seem to escape into a different perspective. You must pay attention to the grid that you put together to make sure this common error does not happen.

If you note that an object is in bad perspective, draw a line to see if it matches the vanishing point. If before getting to your point the line touches the horizon, then you've made a mistake. There are many tools that allow you to draw straight lines in a way fast and so be able to correct this error.



idea that we are falling. To give more color to the image, I put a few red lights on each side, as if they are alarms, and I illuminate the dark side of the character closest to the viewer. This trick is often used to draw the outlines of characters on darkness. I also add some smoke effects and particles to give a little more mood, and with that I conclude this tutorial image. ●

09 Make thumbnails in SketchUp to save time

10 Start to work on textures and digital painting

11 Quickly transform the render base with color and textures



The Artist



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“These tutorials not only provide interesting exercises for the beginner to help build a strong foundation for drawing and painting, but also provide important insights into the mindset of a concept artist. Very useful and inspiring!”

Lois Van Baarle (aka Loish)

Digital concept artist & animator | loish.net

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characters, creatures & concepts

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The Artist



Joseba Alexander

artstation.com/artist/alexanderjoseba

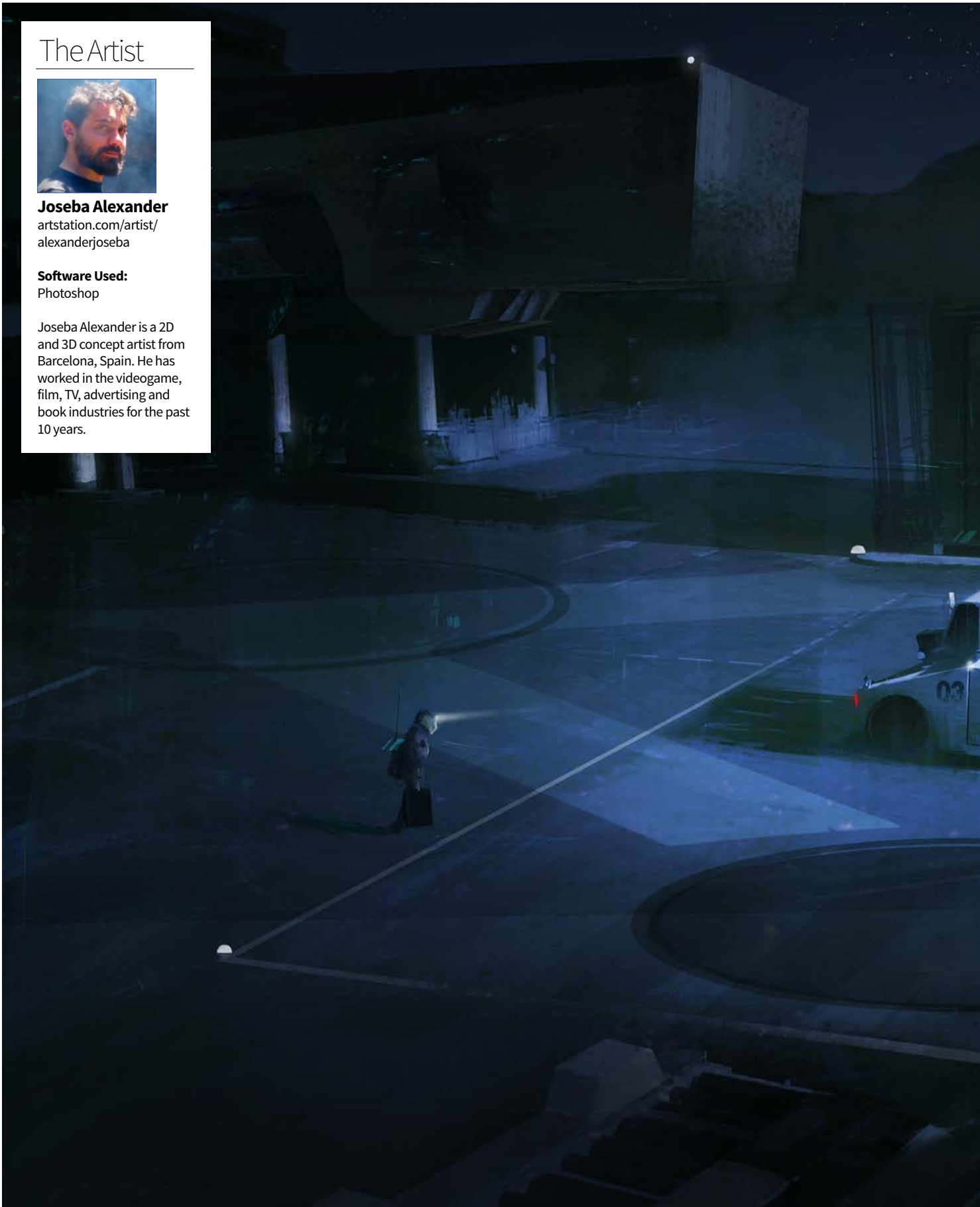
Software Used:

Photoshop

Joseba Alexander is a 2D and 3D concept artist from Barcelona, Spain. He has worked in the videogame, film, TV, advertising and book industries for the past 10 years.

Paint a space buggy

Concept artist Joseba Alexander shows us how you can paint an atmospheric sci-fi scene with simple light techniques ▶





Get tips for creating an image focal point using light...

My intention with this tutorial is to show you, in a step-by-step process, how you can create a simple but good-looking image. With only a few elements and limited tools, you can paint a realistic illustration with a nice atmosphere and good light. With this tutorial, I would like to show you the process I use to create a digital painting with a realistic style using only light techniques to generate atmosphere. I will show that you can do this with only two brushes; a texture brush and a light brush.

The image will be simple, with some decorative assets, and a space buggy. In this case, the buggy will be the central focal point of the image, and I will show how light can be directed in the image to draw the viewer's attention to it. I hope you like it!

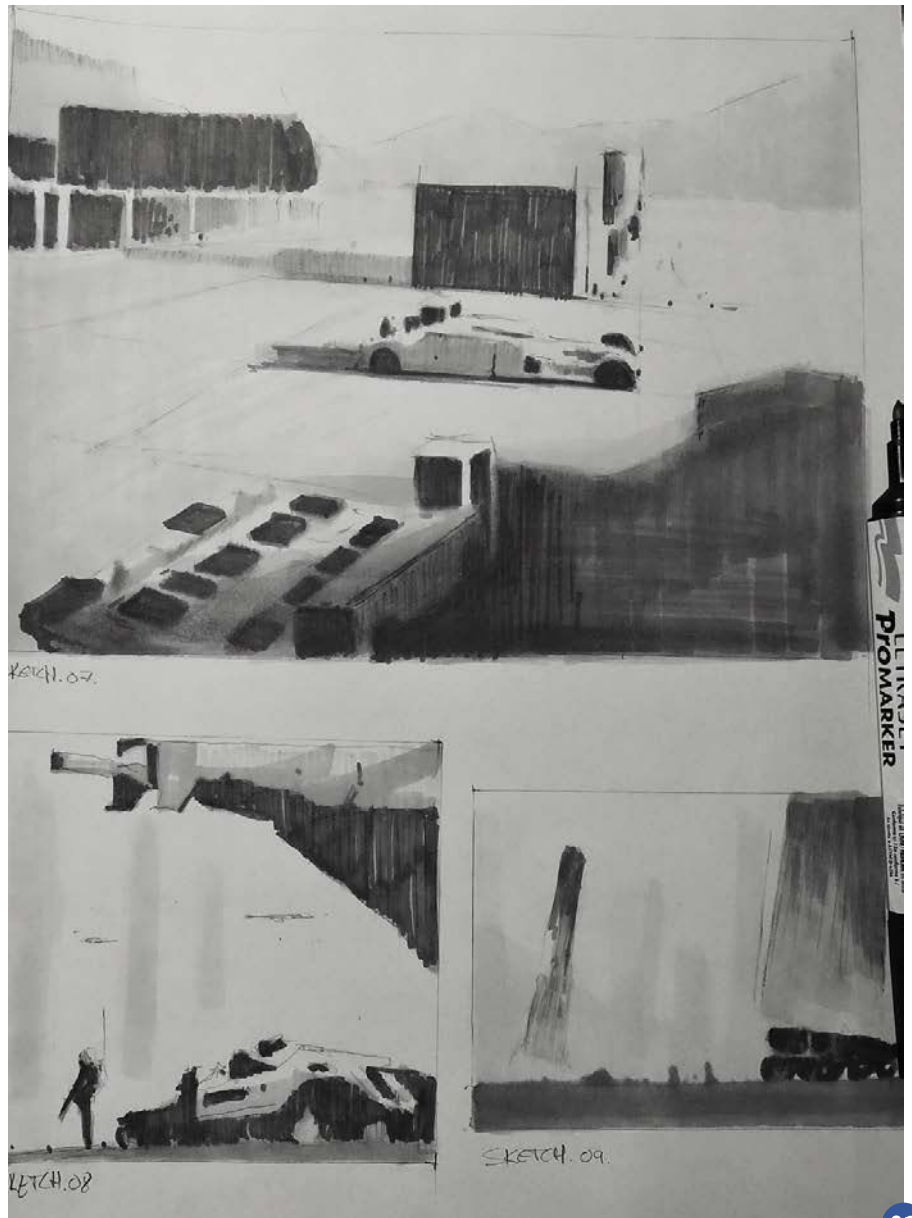
01 Find the composition: The first step is probably the best one, and it is also the most important in the whole process. To find the best image, you need the correct composition and light. Normally at this point I prefer to use a traditional media, creating a scene without specific details.

I like to think first about different ideas and compositions using only markers or ink brushes, and then decide which is the best composition to work with. It is not important whether you draw only a few sketches or 50 sketches before you get the right composition. The intention at this point is only to decide which image is the best one. There's no hurry.

02 Find a central focus: Now it is important to find a center of focus within the image. With this point solved, it will be easier to decide if it is important to put more or less detail in the different parts of the background. At the same time it is a good way to help you decide on the other points of interest in the image. These points will be the supports you will need to help you create a good atmosphere and composition.

03 Start in black and white: Now is the time to start to paint in black and white. Sometimes I like to paint with color directly, as this can sometimes be fun; but for this tutorial I have decided to do it in black and white because it is easier to understand the process.

I don't need to put a lot of detail in at this point; I only need enough to improve the sketch to a point where I can evaluate the image. Sometimes after this point it is good to improve some of the



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light and shadows, but in this composition it is probably not necessary.

04 Finish in black and white: At this stage I finish the image in black and white. There are no details; only values, shadows and light. For this tutorial, I am using only one directional light, coming from the right-hand side of the canvas, because this makes it easier to see the global illumination and the atmosphere in the canvas. My intention is to create a moon station here (I am using references from an airport in this case) but the details of this are not important at this stage. ▶



04

- 01** Create rough sketches to help find the composition
- 02** Decide where the focus of the image will be centered
- 03** Start to paint the sketch in black and white
- 04** Still in black and white, the light and shadows are defined

05 The color base: Now, it is time to start creating the color base for the scene. I use this dark blue color (Fig. 5) because I want to develop an atmosphere that will show that it is night-time. Even though I am working with only simple colors, by making sure the composition has good light and shadows (in the appropriate direction of course), it is possible to create a really cool image.

This is why the work in black and white earlier was important; because you already have a lot of the work done. You can now paint a color base using either Overlay or Multiply. Using a light brush and a texture brush will also help you to add depth to the color base.

06 The light base: It is time now to introduce the light focus in to the canvas. Using a simple artificial light in the direction of the buggy I will have the point of focus. I need to define too the bounced light (light that literally bounces off the objects), sky light (general light in the sky), cast shadow (shadows that are caused by the main light hitting objects) and the terminator (areas that are not directly lit by the main light focus).

With the main light source direction under control I can start to define these points. It is important to think carefully about the direction of the light, and where the shadows will fall if you want to create a realistic effect in your image.

07 Clean the scene: Okay, it is time to clean the image and put some more details in the scene. I like to start by adding some detail and then cleaning some parts of the image. I don't like to paint it all at the same time. As the center of the canvas and the most important element of the image is the buggy, I prefer to focus my efforts on the buggy.

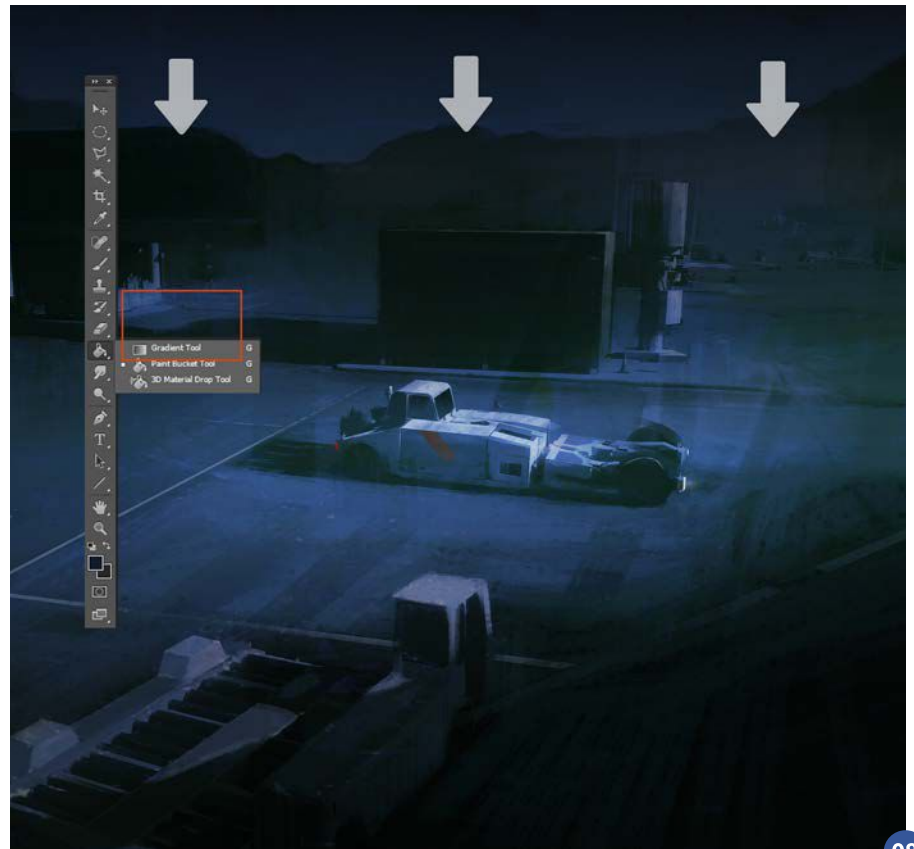
Step by step, I take my time to define the other parts of the image. When I'm working on an illustration I like to use fewer details in the image. I think that with less detail and a good overall atmosphere, you can create clean images which are easy to understand when you look at the finished image.

08 Adjust the sky: Looking at the image, I notice that the sky is too brilliant and bright. I put more shadow in to the sky with the Gradient color tool. With this adjustment made I now have a dark image which is slightly too dark, but that is not a problem for now. You can see how the focus of the image is now is only on the buggy. The image is starting to take up a good atmosphere after only a few steps.



09 Add small details: It is time to start to paint some details in to the background to give the image more interest and a 'complete' look. In the image (Fig. 9) you can see the three points. Two assets (elements 2 and 3) and one is a character (element 1). These points are important for strengthening the image and the buggy. With the addition of this character we are giving a sense of dimension and scale in the image. ►

- 05** Use texture and light brushes to create a color base
- 06** A light focus helps you place effects like bounced light and cast shadow
- 07** Add detail to the image, cleaning it as you go
- 08** Darken the sky using the Gradient tool to bring the light focus lower, towards the buggy
- 09** Elements like these give realism and scale to the image



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“I need to clean and eliminate the darkness to a percentage of maybe only 10%. I can use an Overlay layer or a simple brush with a low opacity to resolve the darkness in this part”

10 Last details and clean: Okay, now is the time to put the last details in to the image. Step by step I can start to put more or less details, depending on my intention and how the image is coming together, but I can't lose the focus. The buggy is the center point of the image so to put more details in other places would be a mistake. I only add some detail to the ground so that the buggy is still the principal element in this illustration, and only the buggy draws attention. We can put in some small artificial lights to create a better atmosphere, but for now this is fine.

11 Check in black and white: At this point of the illustration I like to change the image back to black and white to see the contrast and the values. It helps me to see if the image is



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too strong in the background, or if it is too dark. I can see here that this is true, and the image is too dark in the background objects, so I will need to improve this point.

The car has a good illumination but assets 2 and 3 are too dark. I need to clean and eliminate the darkness to a percentage of maybe only 10%. I can use an Overlay layer or a simple brush with a low opacity to resolve the darkness in this part.

12 Delay the final details: Now it is time to see the image and decide which parts need to improve; if more detail is necessary, or more objects, and so on. For this I like to rest the eyes and the image for a day. This is because I will probably see the image tomorrow with new eyes, and I will then find new elements to improve, or see it from the viewer's perspective and realize it is complete! In this case I add a few more final touches to the floor and the light around the car. ●

10 Extra details are added to the ground and the image is cleaned

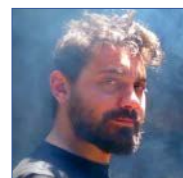
11 Areas that are too dark can be adjusted with an Overlay layer or a simple brush

12 Here we have the finished work!

12



The Artist



Joseba Alexander

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The Artist



Sung Choi

sung-choi.com

Software Used:

Photoshop

Sung Choi (Sunhun Choi) is an award-winning concept artist from South Korea currently working at Bungie in Washington. He specializes in world design and illustration for the entertainment industry.

Paint an abandoned war machine

Bungie concept artist Sung Choi shows how to paint a cool mech scene with simple Photoshop techniques ▶





Quickly and simply create a cool mech scene...

When learning new skills, or trying out software for the first time, it can often be frustrating when the results of your work do not match your expectations of an exciting and accurate painting you had in mind. However, even with the basic tools, simple steps and a little patience, anyone can create pleasing artwork.

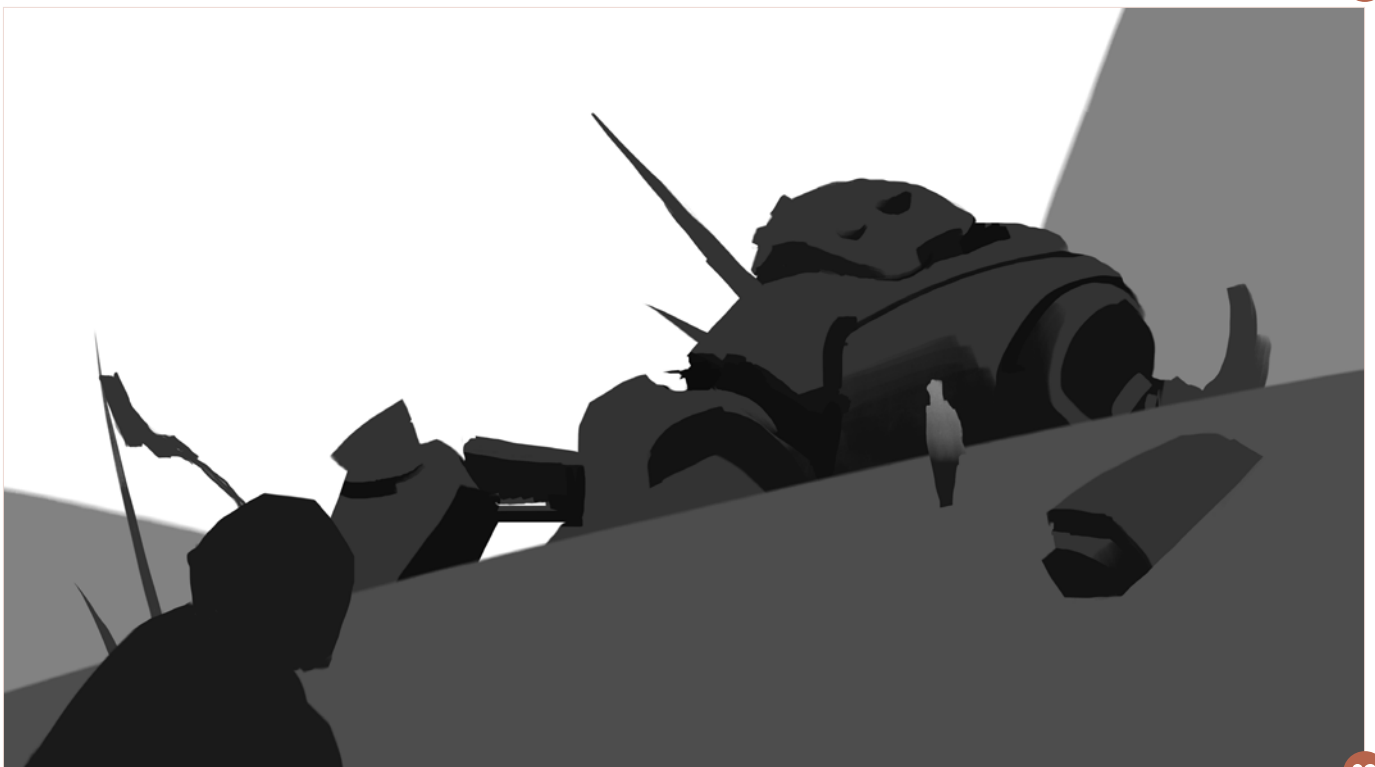
Whether you are new to using Photoshop, or you just want to take some time out to refresh your working process, this tutorial will attempt to show you some simple ways to quickly paint great images.

Here, Sung Choi demonstrates how to create a military inspired mech scene using simple techniques which you can use to practice your painting skills, all while achieving great results very quickly.

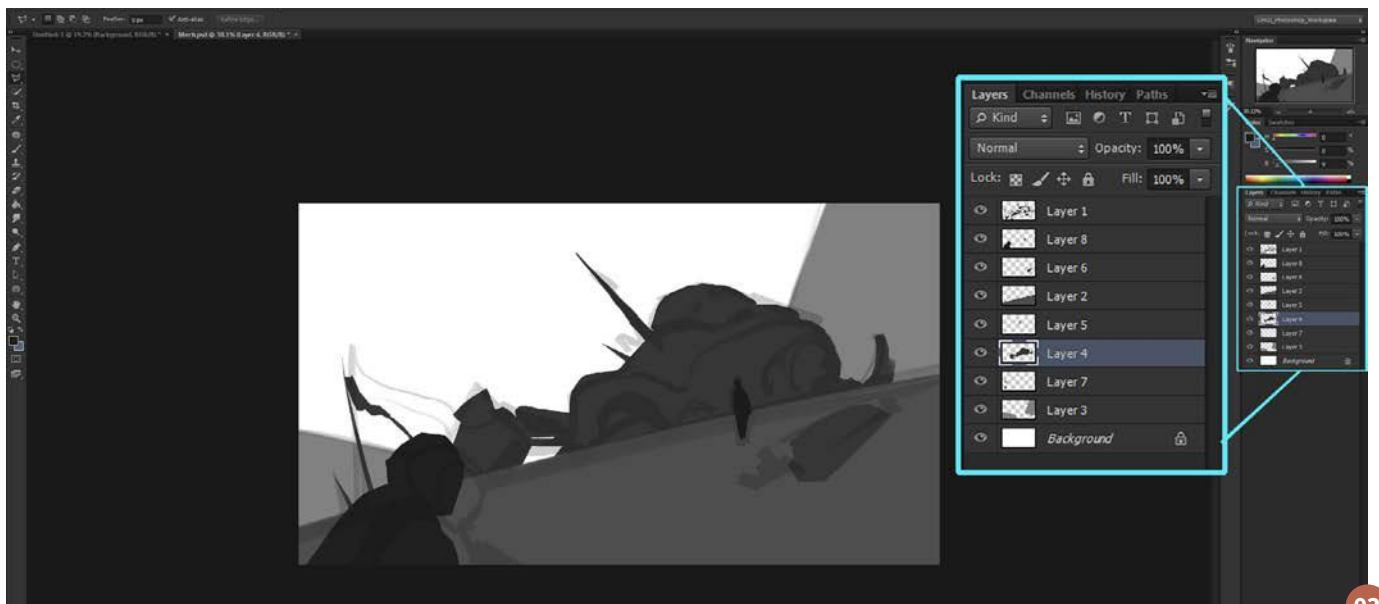
01 Start sketching: This is the first step of any painting where I sketch a rough line drawing of what I want to show is going on in the painting. I normally do this quickly at a level of quality that I can look back on and understand what's in my head, rather than spending a lot of time refining it. This step could be done in a sketchbook or on anything that allows you to draw on top of it. My instinct here is to create a scene showing the moment that a group of soldiers find a giant old war machine lying on



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a hillside. I quickly mark out the form of the machine and a couple of figures.

02 Block out shapes: Based on my line sketch, I now start to block out the key shapes in the scene on separate layers with opaque values. This stage is very important for making decisions on lighting and composition, and it helps here if I use minimal values. It is much easier to do this when you use just black and white values.

By blocking out the shapes, you get to see the groups of value and where the contrasts are most likely to be interesting. In this case, I am keeping the silhouette of the mountain fairly simple, and I add two spikes on the machine's chest to make it the element which draws the most attention.

By keeping the silhouette simple and controlling where the point of interest is in relation to the main contrast in the scene helps the painting to be clear.

03 Organize your layers: It is important to keep your layers organized as this allows you to quickly make adjustments to isolated areas. I put my line sketch layer on the very top and lower its transparency so that I can block out the different shapes in the scene accurately. This way you can use the sketch as a guide when refining each element.

Organizing your layers also helps a ton as you continue to render the whole image. In my case, I separate the machine and soldiers, the hill, and the mountains in the background so that if one

element goes wrong at a later date, the whole image isn't affected.

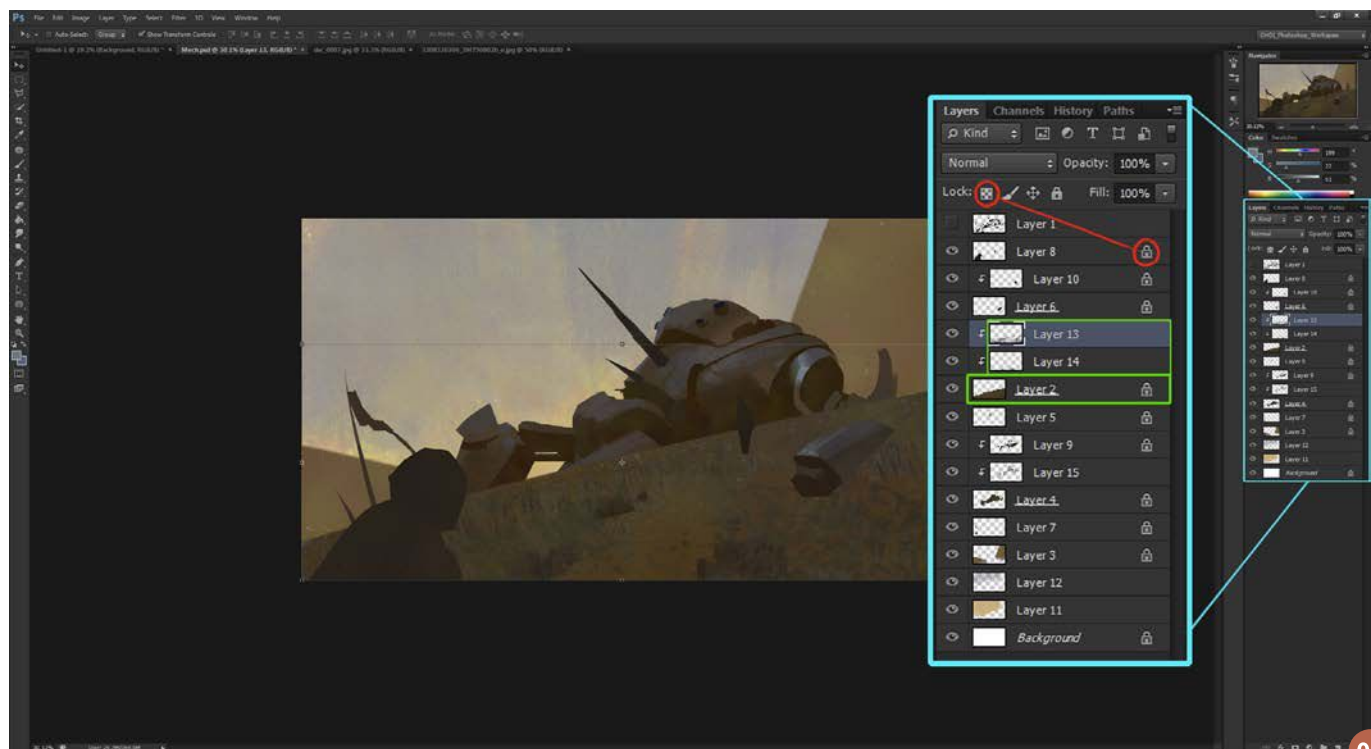
04 Create a color base: Once I have the blocked out shapes in separated layers, I like to start putting a base color into the scene.

01 Quickly make a rough line sketch

02 Block out the elements using black and white to find areas of contrast

03 A screen shot of how Sung organized his layers

04 A color base of warm tones gives a sense of rich color later on



05



06

The color base I put in is a very warm muddy color. This under-painting gives me a good sense of the natural, earthy tone and rich color I am hoping to achieve as I paint on top of the base later on in the painting process.

05 Lock and Clipping Masks: The way I like to paint on top of the color base is by using a layer lock and Clipping Mask (Fig. 05) to protect certain layers. Locking the layer (as you can see in red) allows me to paint in that layer without affecting or going off the shape that layer has. This setting even locks the transparency so

it is extremely helpful when you already have a shape you like.

The Clipping Mask (as you can see in green) gives you an opportunity to create and organize your layers on top of the base layer. This also helps to keep the shape and the transparency of the base layer as you continue to work on the painting.

06 Create light: While I am painting the scene I think that it would be cool to have lighting which helps me to show the time of day in the environment. This scene is set in day

time so there needs to be a sense of daylight, but the environment is mountainous so a lot of the shapes are in the shade.

I carefully add colors based on my knowledge of how colors are relative to each other. For example an overcast area would have a cool color caused by the cool ambient color from the sky, whereas the color on the shapes exposed to the light get an intense, warm color. You can learn more about how light affects color by paying attention to the light in reference images and observing how light affects the world around you.

07 **Render the layers:** I start to render the layers one by one and describe the forms in more detail. My main focus here is to describe the forms clearly but not make them too rendered which might break the consistency of the whole image. Consistency is one of the most important things I keep in my mind as I am painting. If some part of the painting is much more detailed than others, it will look unfinished no matter how much more I paint the scene as a whole.

08 **Detail the scene:** As I continue to paint the scene, I decide to add some white flowers on the ground. This helps me to avoid the repetition of color from the other elements onto the ground. I chose to add flowers because I like to add elements that make the painting richer in a way they won't hurt the overall composition. I also add some grass growing out of the moss on and around the war machine to show that this thing has been here for a long time, and indicate that it has been abandoned.

05 **Layer lock and Clipping Mks allow you to paint without affecting all layers**

06 **Use cool and warm colors to indicate where the light falls**

07 **Remember to maintain consistency when rendering shapes**

08 **A spray of white flowers and grass complements the composition**

09 **Make minor adjustments to keep details in the scene consistent**



07



08

09 **Final adjustments:** After getting a fair amount of the details and information settled, I like to revisit the elements one by one and touch up some of the edges and either kill or bring more detail to them.

I am looking at this painting as a whole to find out what is taking too much attention. I also add

more details on areas where there isn't enough information, such as in the background and sky. All the time I am checking that they are consistent with the rest of the scene. As a final adjustment, I make a color adjustment layer on top of all the layers and manage to put a bit of a purplish mid-tone to sell the sunset mood I am hoping to achieve in the scene.



09

The Artist



Sung Choi
sung-choi.com





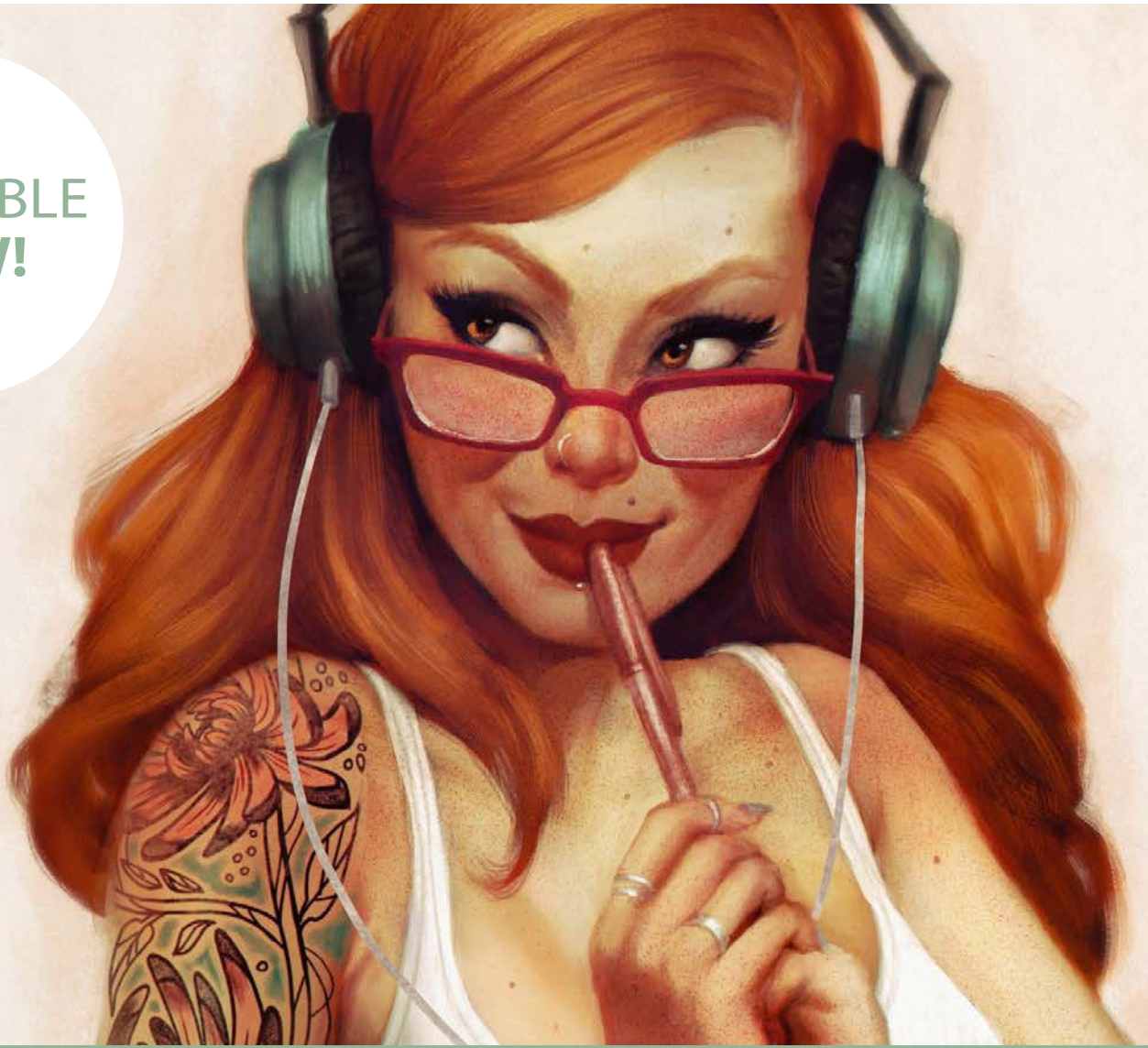
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DIGITAL ART MASTER:

Life is Messy

by Wanchana Intrasonbat

Discover how the master illustrator creates his cartoon style characters and adds narrative to his scenes with this peek inside *Digital Art Masters: Volume 9* ▶



The Artist



**Wanchana
Intrasonbat**
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Software Used:
Photoshop

Wanchana Intrasonbat (a.k.a. Victorior) is a freelance 2D concept artist and illustrator specializing in character design. He is particularly interested in cartoons and depicting fantasy worlds in a cute style.

There are so many different ways to create an illustration. One of the most important factors to get started is inspiration. For this illustration, I was inspired by animation feature films. I wanted to focus on the character design and create an illustration as a starting point for an animation.

I also wanted to improve my portfolio in the hope of appealing to the animation industry. If you are a freelancer or student interested in working in the field of animation pre-production in the form of concept art, visual development or character design, this may be a good way to improve your portfolio.

In order to share what I learned during this process, I will focus on process more than technique. The final image, *Life is Messy*, was part of a project called *Life* in which I made a whole set of pre-production images.

The illustration may not be important or consistent with the pre-production part of the animation process, but I created it anyway as I wanted to establish the look of the film and as I want to collect each step of the process for my portfolio.

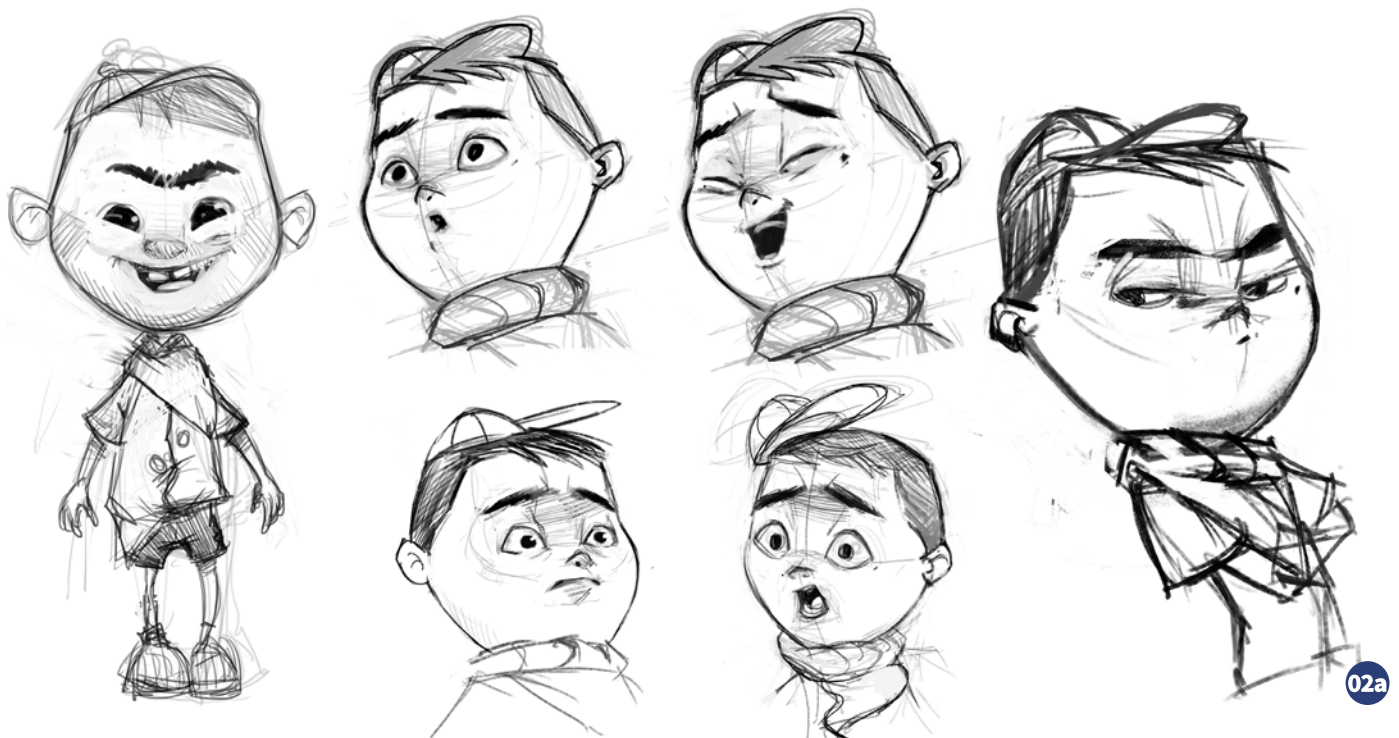
I will tell you the whole process from its conception to the final illustration focusing on elements such as designing the characters, some studies on the scene and colors. A key piece of advice I'd like to offer at this stage is that it is very important to focus and study everything clearly before starting the process of creating illustration



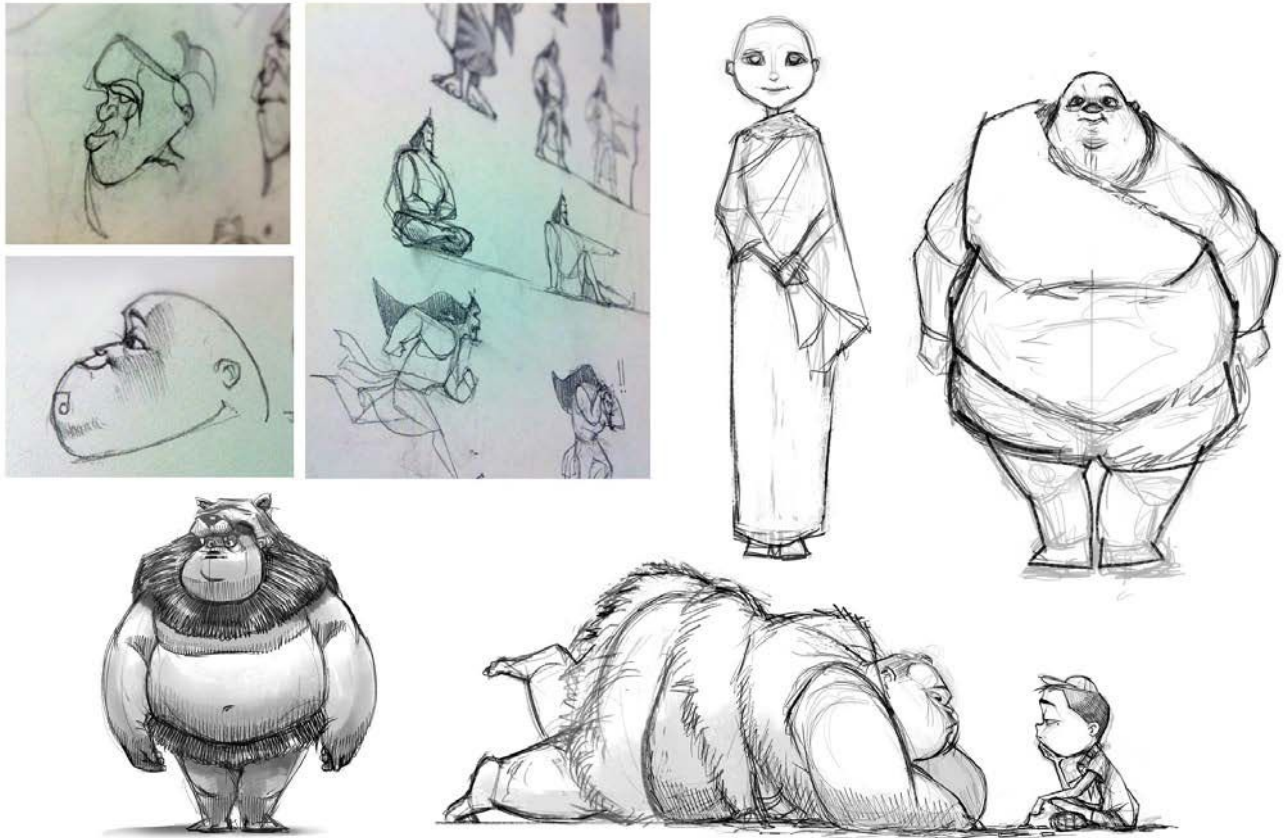
● This drawing is the initial sketch of the idea

01 Concept and story: My initial concepts for the story of *Life* were that it would be located in Thailand and would take inspiration from the Thai hermit yogis and students as I think they would make an interesting story. I planned to create five characters: the leader; the retired leader; a giant, innocent guy; a nun, and a student boy.

The image tells the story of a naughty boy on a field trip with his classmates. The boy, who loves to adventure, wandered off from his teacher and friends, getting lost in the forest until he meets a group of hermits, which leads to an exciting journey. This scene captures the part of the story where they first meet a group of local monkeys in the forest.



02a



02b



03

02 Design and sketching: I had drawn several sketch studies of each character to focus on their individual personalities and shapes. At this stage, I used both pencil and pen in a sketchbook, as well as digital sketching using a tablet and Photoshop.

The important thing when designing characters is that each character's personality and responsibility in the story is clear. My idea for

the boy character is that he is naughty, with big eyebrows, creating the impression that he is a bit of a bully (Fig. 2a). The big guy is innocent and clumsy. The retired leader is the oldest and appears more primitive. He is always angry. The leader is serious and sedate. The nun is beautiful and serene (Fig. 2b).

03 Color rendering: After I had established the design of the final characters through

sketching, I started the process of developing a color study. The steps to follow in this process are line drawing, base color plus some lighting, and then adding the detail until it is time to make your final adjustments.

When you are happy with the line work and want to color it you can set the line layer to Multiply and open another layer under the line layer. Then fill the base tone color and lock the layer ►

by clicking 'Lock transparent pixels'. Next, open the detail layer by selecting Create Clipping Mask above the base tone color then you can detail until you are happy with the design (Fig. 3).

If you repeat this process for each character then eventually you will know them all and be aware of their proportions. This will help you to work out how the characters work in the scene.

04 Color studies: Color studies are another element that can help you to achieve the perfect illustration. In this process my point is to work out the lighting and colors to establish

the atmosphere. You might find photo references helpful at this stage.

In the image, you will see that the colors are changed by the addition of lighting. For example, the skin tone is altered by the hard light and nearly becomes white (Fig. 4a).

I also suggest that you develop each scene before you decide to make the final illustration (Fig. 4b). It is best to find as many references as you can, as this will help you to know details such as different kinds of trees, the atmosphere and the location of the scene. This process will help you a lot.

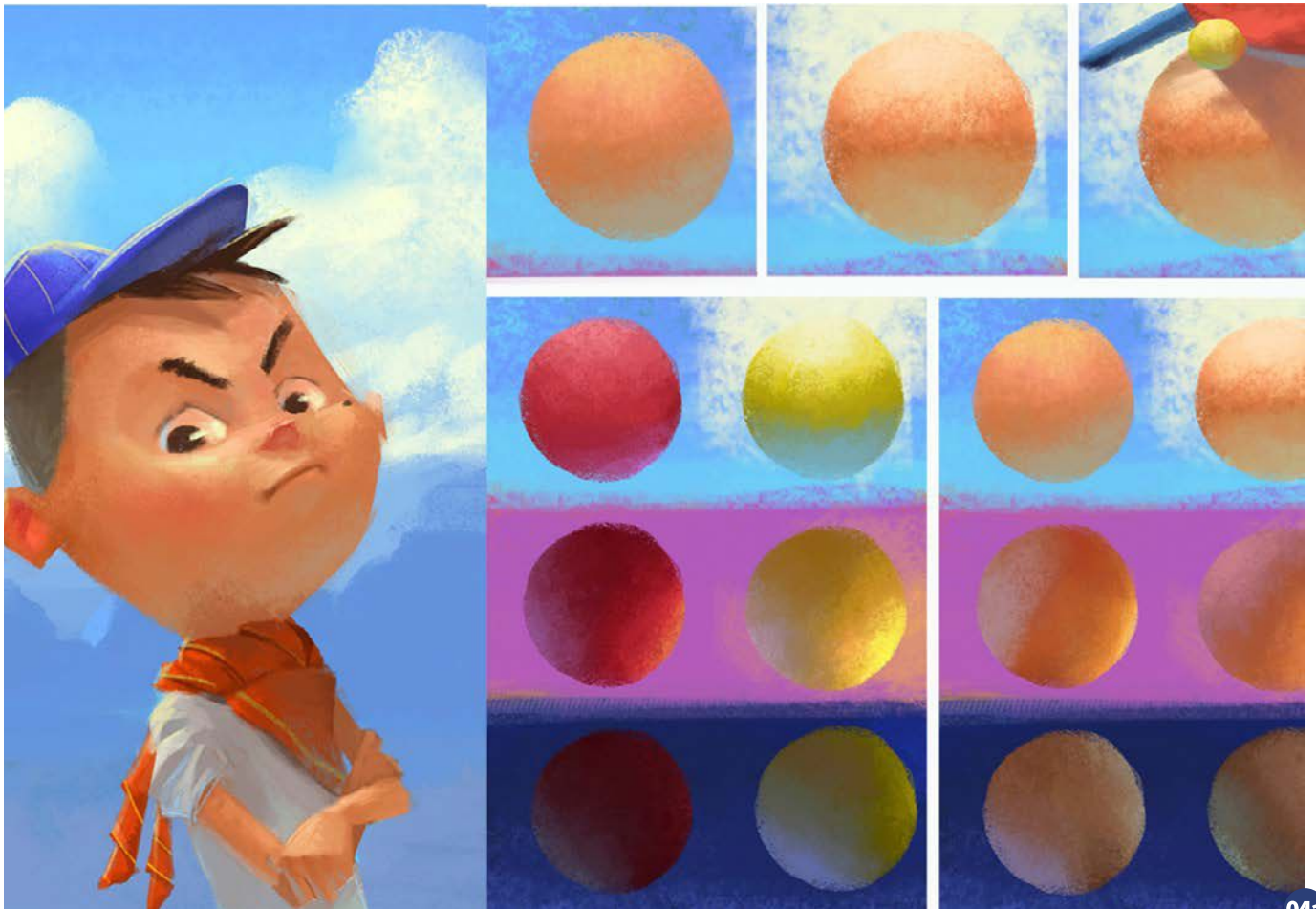
02a The boy had to appear naughty and a bit of a bully

02b Designs for other characters

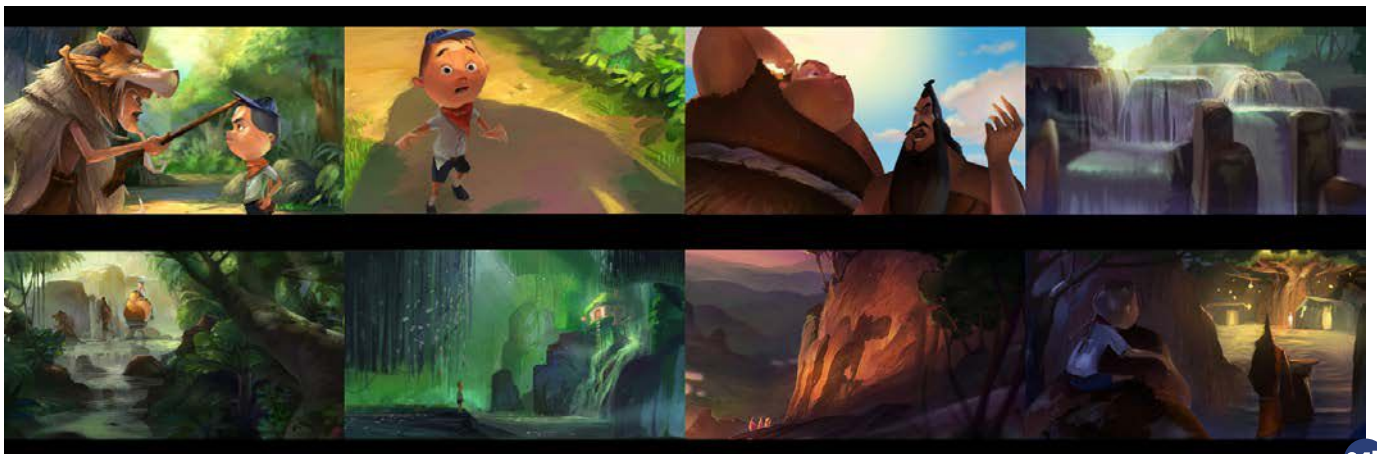
03 Developing the designs helps you understand how the scene works

04a The effects of lighting on color

04b Developed each scene before you begin working on the final illustration



04a



04b

05 Combining elements in the illustration:

Once I had all the details, characters, location and theme of the scene decided it was time to combine them together and set them in the scene for an illustration. I started with the sketches; for finding the layout and composition you can use just line (Fig. 5a). I went with a vertical canvas and made it look like a movie poster.

Next, I set the color key of the illustration (Fig. 5b). Then I started rendering the characters one by one, focusing here on the quality and detail in each character by using the color guidelines that were established in the color sketch to manage the atmosphere.

06 Refining details:

To finish each character I used the normal process starting with the line, color tone and then adding some detail. In the detailing process, I used real photo textures to help create a quality finish. To texture the big guy, I found a fur texture and set the layer to Soft Light, and then painted over it to perfect the detail (Fig. 6a). Create each texture in a separate canvas and add as much detail as you want.

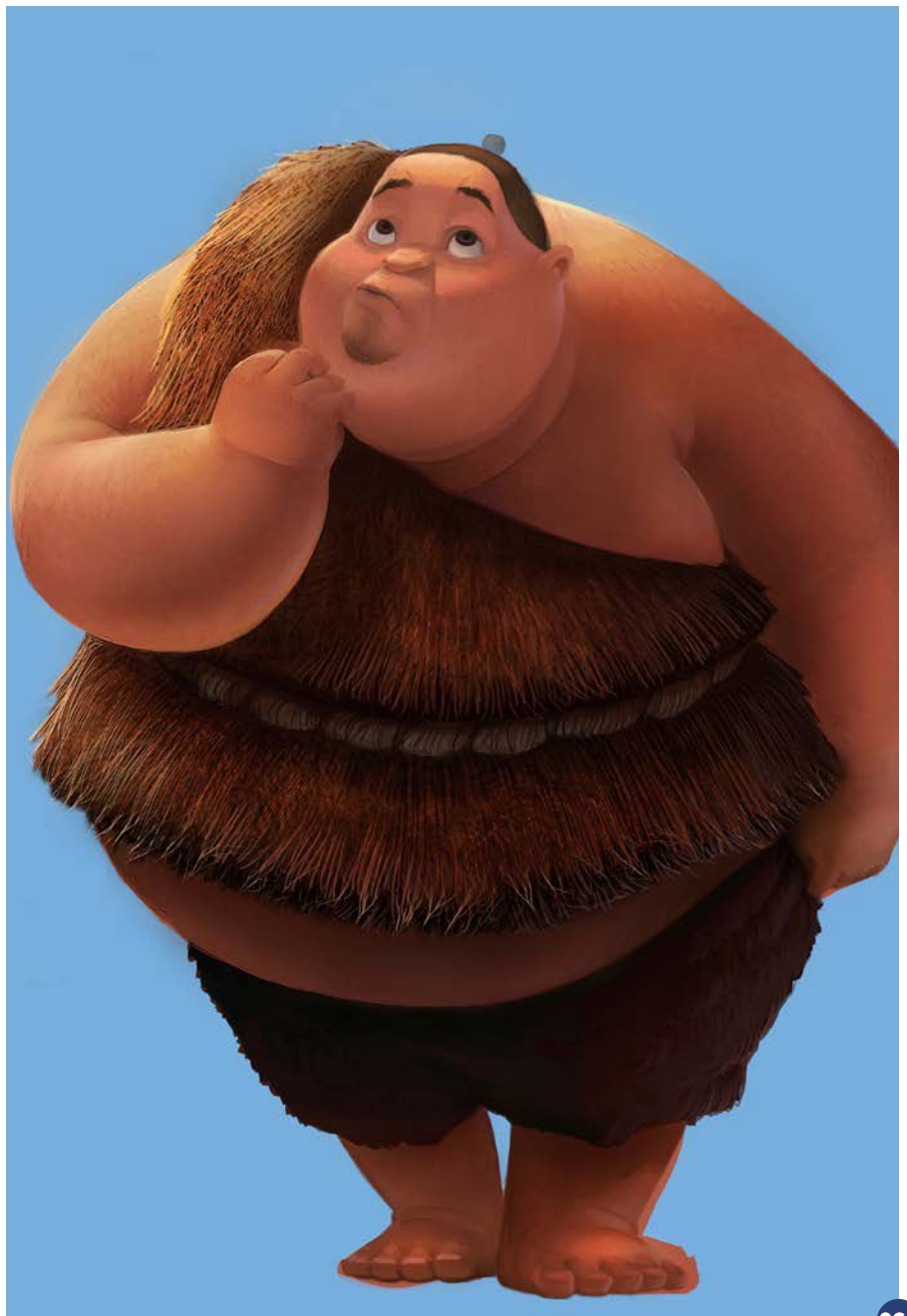
After each character was textured, I added them to the scene and began to work on the background and modify the lighting. To create the background, I started by doing the outlines and filling the color for each tree, varying the kinds of tree to make the background look more natural (Fig. 6b). I also mixed some photos into my illustration to add some extra detail. I continued to further the detail by adding to the painting and as much as I could until I reached the quality that I was okay with. Finally I adjusted the final lighting and a few details, and then it was finished! I hope you will learn something from my article, thank you so much for reading. I hope you will enjoy the process and create your own illustrations with your own stories! I look forward to seeing them! ●



05a



05b



06a

05a Sketching to establish composition

05b Adding color to the composition

06a Developing photo textures and rendering the detail improves the quality

06b Earlier sketches helped establish the background theme, color and lighting



The Artist



**Wanchana
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